صدائے دل

An Echo From the HEART

(Volume three)

A collection of lectures delivered by:
Hadrat Maulānā 'Abdullāh Sāhib Kāpodravī
(former rector of Dar al-Ulum Falah-e-Darain, Tadkeshwar)

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Grand Muftī of Pakistan

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم، وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين

Volume two of *An echo from the heart* is in front of me at present. I had the opportunity of perusing through it in different places. The different paragraphs which I read and the topics which I saw made me feel as if this is really an echo from my heart.

I have had a cordial relationship with <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Maulānā ‘Abdullāh <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib Surtī *dāmat barakātuhum* for the past thirteen years. I first met him in Toronto, Canada, and then in America. And we remain in constant contact via the telephone. Every meeting brought joy to me, and was a means for increasing my love for him.

He served Dār al-‘Ulūm Falā<u>h</u> Dārayn, Tadkeshwar, Surat, Gujarat for about 25 years. The excellent manner in which he served the students and ran the administration of this institution resulted in its popularity in distant lands and countries. He is now benefiting students, *‘ulamā’*, academic and religious circles in different countries of the world with his sweet tongue through his lectures, and academic and revivalist assemblies.

An echo from the heart is actually a cry from his heart which is filled with pain [for the *ummah*]. Through his lectures and assemblies, he provides a wise treatment for the pain and injuries which he witnessed in the Muslim societies of Europe, America, Canada, Africa and Asia; and the waywardness which he saw in the youth, academic circles, masses, in the homes and business centres of Muslims. The different topics which I saw in *An echo from the heart* are all cures for the ailments which are found in Muslim society.

The excellent internal and external merits which Allāh *taʿālā* blessed the Maulānā with are fruits of his deep association with our pious elders. *Māshā Allāh*, the Maulānā derived maximum benefit from them.

However, I am both surprised and ashamed that the benefit which we ought to have taken from this great personality has not been taken.

I make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to bless the Maulānā with long life accompanied with good health and wellness. And to spread and complete the guidance which different sections of the *ummah* are receiving from him. May Allāh *taʿālā* spread this "echo of the heart" which is really the cry of my heart as well, through the four corners of the world. Āmīn. We seek help from Allāh *taʿālā* alone.

Mu<u>h</u>ammad Rafīʿ ʿUthmānī, presently in Toronto, Canada

19 Dhū al-Qaʿdah 1428/29 November 2007.

EVALUATION

Hadrat Maulānā Dr. Tanwīr Ahmad Khān Sāhib Peshāwarī Hyderābādī *dāmat barakātuhum*[1]

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

This insignificant servant read volume two of *An echo from the heart* of Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbdullāh Sāhib Kāpaudrī *mudda zilluhu*. What can an unqualified person like me write on a book written by such an erudite scholar!? I thought quite a bit about this and then concluded that an order takes precedence over respect. I am taking the courage to write some of my impressions. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept.

The fact of the matter is that the painful, affectionate and humble manner in which he showed his concern for the reformation of *ʿulamā'*, teachers, students and masses is rarely seen in today's times. All his topics are filled with stories of the pious elders, words of advice of Hadrat Thānwī

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[1] Hadrat Maulānā Tanwīr Ahmad Sāhib is the head of Siyānatul Muslimīn, Hyderabad, Sindh. He benefited from the company of Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* and after his demise, attached himself to Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib Jalālābādī *rahimahullāh*. He benefited tremendously from him to the extent that he is now listed among his senior *khulafā'*. He completed the Dars-e-Nizāmī in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

rahimahullāh and his special manner of tutoring. All these come to the fore like a special spark in a manner that is filled with pain and concern. Consequently, they continually settle in the heart.

Furthermore, the special manner in which he quotes Qur'ānic verses and provides a concise commentary and explanation of them is really to his credit. I make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to make Hadrat Maulānā and all his books causes of guidance for the Muslim *ummah*. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless him with long life with wellness and soundness of limbs. May this fountain of guidance flow forever.

Was salām
Tanwīr Ahmad
6 Shaʿbān al-Muʿazzam 1427 A.H.

FOREWORD

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Muftī Saʿīd Ah̲mad S̲āh̲ib Pālanpūrī *dāmat barakātuhum* Shaykh al-H̲adīth, Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband

الحمد لله وكفى وسلام على عباده الذين اصطفى، أما بعد

In the Ramad̲ān of this year – 1428 A.H. – I received a valuable book while I was in London. The book is titled *An echo from the heart*. This book is a collection of lectures delivered by the pride of Gujarat, the proficient litterateur, H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAbdullāh S̲āh̲ib Kāpaudrī *dāmat barakātuhum*. Two volumes have already been printed, and the third volume is in the process of publication.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā's son, H̲āfiz̲ Muh̲ammad Ibrāhīm S̲āh̲ib, who is presently residing in London, insisted I write a foreword to the third volume. I thought about it for several months as to what I should write. Should I write about the book? This will be of no use because as the Persian saying goes, the true identity of musk is that its fragrance must engulf a person automatically. There is no need for the perfumer to speak highly of it. The one who is beloved to you does not have to bother about his/her appearance [he or she will still be beloved to you]. When something emanates from the heart, it has its effect.

I read different sections of both volumes during the hours of solitude in Ramad̲ān. My heart was overjoyed at times, and my eyes were reduced to

tears at other times. When the speaker described the insensibility of our people, it was as though he was warning them of an army which is about to attack them. His words become portraits of emotions. He brings in academic points, quotes the sayings of the elders, describes the weakness of Europe – and all this causes the joy of the speech to multiply.

I then thought about writing something about the speaker himself. But I found him to be a conglomeration of many merits. So how can I describe them all? His mastery of the Arabic and Urdu languages, concern for our people and the *ummah*, and expertise in the field of administration are all qualities in which he has no equal.

I know him since childhood. We studied *Hidāyah* (volumes one and two) together. He was much elder than me. He stopped his studies in Dhābel after he was put in charge of Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Ra<u>h</u>mān, Maulwī ʿAzīz ar-Ra<u>h</u>mān and Maulwī <u>H</u>abīb ar-Ra<u>h</u>mān Gārdī; and came to Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. He used to attend the *Hidāyah* classes as a listener [not as a registered student]. I was a student of this class. We used to sit next to each other and study from the same book.

Later on, we worked not only in the same area, but in the same district. In this way, I had an opportunity to study Maulānā closely, and we used to have many private discussions. He is a planner, a thinker, big-hearted, extremely hardworking, and desirous of the progress of others. But he left all his work before time. In essence, to a certain extent, the

doctors got him sick, some of his associates also vexed him, and his children also pulled him towards themselves. One was drawing him to Canada, another to Malawi, and another to London. Thus, as the saying goes: if a person receives his bread for free, who is going to do farming?

However, Allāh *taʿālā* created good in all this as well, in the sense that Hadrat began delivering lectures in various places. These have been penned by his son, Hāfiz Ibrāhīm Sāhib and a few students. Other lectures were compiled from tape recordings. Two volumes of these lectures have been printed. They have been purchased immediately and people everywhere are reading them. This third volume is now in the process of publication. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this volume and also the other volumes which are to follow. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable the *ummah* to benefit tremendously from this great treasure. This is most certainly easy for Allāh *taʿālā*.

All praise is due to Allāh, the Rabb of the universe. Salutations to the Noble Prophet, his family and all his companions.

Dictated by Saʿīd Ahmad Pālanpūrī, *may Allāh pardon him.*
Servant of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband
5 Safar al-Muzaffar 1429 A.H.

PUBLISHER’S NOTE

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

I write with extreme joy and happiness that the third volume of *An echo from the heart* has been completed and is now available to the public. The *ʿulamā’* and I myself were waiting anxiously for it since a long time. I am most grateful to Allāh *taʿālā*, the most-affectionate, for having enabled me to fulfil my wishes. I also hope this continues in the future, and we continue benefiting from the words of wisdom of my respected father. This is certainly not difficult for Allāh *taʿālā*.

Māshā Allāh, the first two volumes of *An echo from the heart* were very well received. Two editions of both volumes were printed and are already sold out. The *ʿulamā’* and other seniors of the *ummah* were waiting anxiously for the third volume. The waiting period is over and, by the grace of Allāh *taʿālā*, the book is now in your hands. I ask for pardon from those who had to bear the inconvenience of waiting for two years. This was partly due to my laziness and of my friends. *Inshā Allāh*, we hope this series will be speeded up and the fourth volume will be completed as quickly as possible, and be made available to the public.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Fad̲l Mah̲mūd S̲āh̲ib Falāh̲ī *dāmat barakātuhum*, a lecturer of H̲adīth in Jāmiʿah Rah̲mānīyyah ʿĀlīpūr, put his heart and soul in the preparation of this third volume. May Allāh *taʿālā* honour his efforts with acceptance and confer him

with success in both the worlds. It would be a great injustice if I do not express my thanks to my respected teacher, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yūsuf Sāhib Tankārwī *dāmat barakātuhum*, the Shaykh al-Hadīth of Dār al-ʿUlūm Falāh Dārayn Tadkeshwar, and my respected friend, Qārī Nāzir Husayn Sāhib, a lecturer at Dār al-ʿUlūm Falāh Dārayn Tadkeshwar. These two personalities took the great responsibility of proof reading this volume despite their many other occupations, and fulfilled it in an excellent manner. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward them abundantly, and may He take a lot of work from them.

In like manner, I am also grateful to Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad ibn Muftī Muhammad Sāhib Āchaudī, a lecturer at Jāmiʿah Qāsimīyyah ʿArabīyyah, Kharaud, for putting his heart and soul in checking the manuscript. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him. May Allāh *taʿālā* also reward my companion, Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Khālid Sāhib Falāhī Kāpaudrī, the head *qārī* at Jāmiʿah Qāsimīyyah ʿArabīyyah, Kharaud, whose sincere and valuable assistance enabled this book to pass the stages of publication and come into the public domain. I am also grateful to my brothers Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* and Hadrat Maulānā Ismāʿīl Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* for having repeatedly directed my attention to this work. I am most grateful to my mentor, Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muhammad ʿUmar Fārūq Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*, the Shaykh al-Hadīth of our Dār al-ʿUlūm, London. He used to enquire about the progress of this book whenever I met him, and would

honour me with valuable words of advice and *duʿās*. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him as well.

How can I forget Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad (Nānā Patel) Sāhib Kāpaudrī who is presently residing in London, and Hadrat Maulānā Saʿīd Sanjānwī, who, like previously, provided monetary assistance for the printing of this book. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept their services and reward them. *Āmīn.*

The present volume contains some of my fathers talks which were delivered in Dār al-ʿUlūm London, and Jāmiʿah Riyād al-ʿUlūm Leicester. And one lecture which was delivered in Dār al-ʿUlūm Chāpī, Pālanpūr, India. We tried to first of all present the talks which my honourable father delivered to teachers and students [of *madāris* and *dār al-ʿulūms*] in the light of his experiences during his lengthy academic and educational life. In this way, teachers and students will be able to benefit from these talks.

I conclude by making *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to shower this third volume with acceptance just as He did with the first two volumes. And may he make this work a means for my guidance and salvation. *Āmīn.*

Ibrāhīm Kāpaudrī, servant of Dār al-ʿUlūm London
1 Jumādā ath-Thāniyah 1432 A.H./5 May 2011

Note: My honourable father now has a website. If anyone wishes to listen to audio recordings of his lectures and talks, these are available on the following website:

web-ra-ees.co.uk
e-mail: ibrahim25667@hotmail.co.uk
ibrahim@ra-ees.co.uk

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The original homeland of my father is Jītālī, Ankleshwar, district Bharūch, Gujarat. In the time of the British, the Patel of each village enjoyed many privileges. He was considered to be the village judge. The leadership of the village was in my family since quite some time. My paternal grandfather was born in 1875 and passed away in 1909. His name was Husayn Qāsim Patel. He led a dignified and simple life, and was looked at with respect in the area. He had five sons, viz. Ibrāhīm, Muhammad, Ismāʿīl, Mūsā and Ahmad, and four daughters. Our family tree is printed in Gujarati and English.

My father was ten or eleven years old when my grandfather passed away. He lived with his uncle in Jaunāgarh and studied English. He then experienced certain conditions which caused him to give up his studies and to start work. He began working as a teacher in a Gujarati school in a nearby village.

After working there for some time, he was influenced by one of his co-workers to go to Burma. Burma was well-known as a place for business in those days. My father worked in Rangoon and a few other cities.

My father's maternal uncle, Ibrāhīm Qāsim Patel, lived in Kāpaudrā, and he was considered to be a

senior Patel of this town. My father married his only daughter, Āminah. He was encouraged to puchase a house – not in Jītālī – but in Kāpaudrā.

He remained in Burma until 1925. On his return to India, he got into a partnership with his brother, Muhammad Patel, and they started a clothing business in Ankleshwar. But this business was not very successful, so he went back to Burma after four to five years.

He started a business in Heho which falls under the district of Shān State. I was born in this place in 1933 (1352 A.H.). I had five sisters before me, so it was a very joyous occasion for the family to now have a male offspring.

My father had a strong bond with the *ʿulamā'* of Burma, and he used to correspond with Hadrat Maulānā ʿĪsā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was a *khalīfah* of Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. Moreover, my father would also write occasionally to Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. He would regularly ask these pious elders to make *duʿā* for me.

From among his old letters, there is one letter in which he requested Hakīm al-Ummat Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* for *duʿā*. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* wrote in the margin: "I am making *duʿā*."

I was about two to two and half years old when my father decided to leave Burma in 1935 and return to India. Since he had sold his house in Jītālī, he went

to live in Kāpaudrā. This was a time when Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī's *rahimahullāh* popularity had spread in every corner of the country. My father had already pledged *bayʿah* to him through correspondence, and now, after obtaining permission from him, he went to Thāna Bhawan to benefit directly from the blessings of his shaykh.

During those days, ʿAllāmah Shabbīr Ahmad ʿUthmānī *rahimahullāh*, ʿAllāmah Badr ʿĀlam Meerutī *rahimahullāh* and ʿAllāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* had come to Dhābel. My father would go regularly to meet them.

He would also invite ʿAllāmah Badr ʿĀlam Meerutī *rahimahullāh*, ʿAllāmah Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* and Muftī Mahdī Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh* to Kāpaudrā. From among the *'ulamā'* of Rānder, my father had good contact with Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, Maulānā Hakīm Ibrāhīm Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Maulānā Ashraf Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

My father did not acquire a lot of Islamic knowledge, but he was very regular with recitation of the Qur'ān, reading of Islamic books, and through the companionship of *'ulamā'* and righteous personalities, he knew many things, and was very firm in his beliefs and practices.

As a result of the companionship of the above-mentioned personalities, my father was quite strict in my training and supervision. He put in me the

habit of performing salāh with congregation and reciting the Qur'ān from a young age. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward him with the best of rewards.

Our family members who lived in Jītālī generally acquired high qualifications in western education. Some of my uncles were judges, tax-collectors, and military men. Some of their sons were lawyers. Therefore, my family members were also inclined to having me to acquire western education. But my father had already decided to get me to study *Dīn*. Although our economic situation was very unfavourable – which demanded that I acquire western education and go away to Africa or get a job in the government – my father bore all the hardships throughout his life, and instructed me to acquire *Dīnī* knowledge and to strive hard in this path.

At the time, I could not perceive the extent of my father's sacrifice. But now when I think about it, I make *duʿā* for my parents for having cast aside worldly comforts and got me to acquire this blessed knowledge.

Had it not been for my parents' steadfastness, I would have also been working in a government office or passing my life in some city in Africa. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this great sacrifice of theirs, and bless them with high stages. Āmīn.

There was a considerable number of people in Kāpaudrā who had pledged *bayʿah* to Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. They would all assemble at the house of my uncle, Muhammad Pandor, who was well-

known as Maulwī Sāhib, and read the *Mawā'iz* of Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* from *zuhr* to *ʿasr*. My uncle would read, and the others would listen. At times, he would also read the *Mathnawī* in a special manner. I would occasionally join my father in this blessed assembly. I could not understand the *Mawā'iz* because of my tender age, but the desire to take admission in a *madrasah* and seek *Dīnī* knowledge developed in me from that time. There is no doubt whatsoever that those blessed assemblies played a part in creating this inclination in me.

My student days and my teachers

My early education commenced in *Madrasah Islāmīyyah* in Kāpaudrā, district Bharūch. Janāb Mukarram Hāfiz Ibrāhīm ibn Ismāʿīl Mullā *rahimahullāh* who was a resident of Umarwāda was my first teacher. I studied the *qā'idah* (*alif, bā*) to the completion of the Qur'ān, basic Urdu to the end of *Taʿlīm al-Islām*, the two parts of *Bahishtī Thamar*, and *Chehel Sabaq* under him. I attended school until grade five in my local school. I took admission in *Jāmiʿah Islāmīyyah*, Dhābel in 1944.

I studied the first two years of Persian under Maulānā Dā'ūd Kafletwī and Maulānā ʿAbd al-Hayy ibn Muftī Ismāʿīl Bismillāh *rahimahullāh*. I also studied the first year of Arabic under Maulānā ʿAbd al-Hayy Bismillāh. He was an erudite scholar with a special interest in Urdu and Persian. He had a unique way of making us understand the lessons. He was a very affectionate teacher and tutor.

Apart from teaching us the Persian textbooks, he delivered special lessons on the books, *Akhlāq Muhsinī* and *Yūsuf Zulaykhā*. His house was in Dhābel itself, but he also had a room within the campus of the *madrasah*. He had many Arabic, Persian and Urdu books in this room. I had the opportunity of going to his room to run errands for him. He used to encourage me to study the different books.

The book, *al-Fārūq*, of Maulānā Shiblī *rahimahullāh* was kept in this room. I started reading this book and enjoyed it so much that I remain fully occupied with in for the next few days. I think this book was largely instrumental in creating in me the urge to read books. I also read *Sīrat ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz* and other books in the same year.

I studied the Qur'ān under Qārī Bandah Ilāhī Meerutī Sāhib and Qārī Muhammad Hasan Sāhib Amrohī *rahimahullāh*. I studied the second year Arabic textbooks under Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Ibrāhīm Sufi Dhābeli Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was well-known as Sufi Sāhib. These books included the following: *Nūr al-Īdāh, Qudūrī, ʿIlm as-Sīghah, Bahr al-Ādāb, Taysīr al-Mantiq* and other books. Sufi Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was well known for his strictness, adherence to rules and regulations, and full preparations before coming to class. By Allāh's grace, the entire year passed well, and Sufi Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was pleased with me. After the initial two months or so, Sufi Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had considerable confidence in me and

would not even test me. He would pose some questions occasionally.

My journey to Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband took place without my father's knowledge. Hadrat Muftī Ismāʿīl Bismillāh *rahimahullāh* who was the principal of Jāmiʿah Islāmīyyah and was particularly concerned about my well being because of his bond with my father, was also very displeased with this journey. But some of my friends who were with me in the initial years of our Arabic classes took admission in Dār al-ʿUlūm.

My journey to Deoband took place without the permission of these elders, and so, I had to suffer the consequences later on. O Allāh! Forgive me my sins.

This journey to Deoband took place in 1948 – a year after partition. Hindu Muslim riots were continuing throughout Northern India. Two months passed in Deoband without having done anything fruitful. I then took admission for *Kanz* and *Sharh Jāmī*. I studied *Kanz ad-Daqā'iq* under Maulānā Nasīr Ahmad Khān Sāhib *mudda zilluhu* (who is presently the Shaykh al-Hadīth of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband), *Sharh Jāmī* under Maulānā Fakhr al-Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and *Nafhatul ʿArab* under Maulānā Sayyid Hasan *rahimahullāh*. I studied these as a registered student. And I studied *Usūl ash-Shāshī* under Maulānā Muhammad Naʿīm Sāhib Deobandī as an un-registered student. *Al-hamdulillāh*, the year ended well and I achieved good symbols.

The following year, I returned to Dār al-ʿUlūm in Shawwāl, and commenced *Sharh al-Wiqāyah* under Maulānā Nasīr Ahmad Khān Sāhib, *Maqāmāt Harīrī* under Maulānā Miʿrāj al-Haqq Sāhib, *Nur al-Anwār* and other books. However, I fell ill three months later with fever. A doctor in Sahāranpūr made a wrong diagnosis, and my friends sent me back home. Two months passed in different treatments. My father and relatives felt I should take admission in Dhābel once again. There were no fourth year students that year, so I was advised to take admission in either the third year or fifth year. Because of my ill-health, I took admission in the fifth year class. I studied *Hidāyah Awwalayn* and *Mutanabbī* under Maulānā Mahmūd Sāhib Pandor Simlakī, and *Husāmī* and *Mukhtasar al-Maʿānī* under Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib.

The following year I studied *Mishkāt Sharīf* and *Sharh al-Aqā'id* under Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib, *Jalālayn Sharīf* under Maulānā ʿAbd al-Jabbār Sāhib, and *Hidāyah Ākhirayn* under Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Sāhib. I then completed my *Daurah-e-Hadīth*.

I studied *Bukhārī Sharīf* volume one under Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd al-Jabbār Aʿzamī; volume two, *Muslim Sharīf* and *Tahāwī* under Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib, and *Abū Dā'ūd Sharīf* under Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Deobandī Sāhib. I received my qualification certificate in 1953.

Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd al-Jabbār Sāhib Aʿzamī had studied Ahādīth in Sahāranpūr under Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth *rahimahullāh* and other lecturers.

Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib received his *sanad* of Hadīth from Shaykh al-Islam Sayyid Husayn Ahmad Madanī *rahimahullāh* and other lecturers of Dār al-ʿUlūm. He also received special permission for Hadīth from the distinguished Islamic scholar of the world, Shaykh Zāhid al-Kautharī *rahimahullāh*.

Later on, Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib became Shaykh al-Hadīth in Akaurah Katak, Pakistan, and is presently in some other madrasah. Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Deobandī was Shaykh al-Hadīth in Chāphī and Tārāpūr for several years. He had studied *Daurah* under Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*.

My Arabic books of the fourth and fifth years had remained incomplete because of my illness. I made up for this in 1959-1960 as follows: I had to go to Deoband for two years to accompany Maulwī ʿAbd ar-Rahmān Sāhib and Hāfiz Habīb ar-Rahmān Sāhib – the two sons Maulānā Ismāʿīl Gārdī Sāhib. During my stay there, I re-studied *Sharh al-Wiqāyah*, *Hidāyah Awwalayn* (complete) under Maulānā Akhtar Husayn Sāhib, *Mutanabbī* under Maulānā Miʿrāj al-Haqq Sāhib, *Baydāwī Sharīf* under Maulānā Fakhr al-Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, and *Bukhārī Sharīf* for six months under Hadrat Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh*.

During this time, I also studied certain lessons of *Tahāwī Sharīf* and *Rasm al-Muftī* under Hadrat Muftī Mahdī Hasan *rahimahullāh*. I also received *sanads* from Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn Murādābādī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Muftī Mahdī Hasan *rahimahullāh*, and ʿAllāmah Balyāwī *rahimahullāh*. I obtained the *sanad* for the *Musalsalāt* from Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. I have preserved all these *sanads*.

During this period (1959/1960), I studied a few Arabic literature and grammar textbooks under Shaykh Mahmūd Misrī Tantāwī who had been sent from Jāmiʿah Azhar. In the course of frequenting him during this period of two years, I benefited tremendously from him in understanding the contemporary styles of Arabic literature. Shaykh Mahmūd *rahimahullāh* was especially attached to me, and I had the opportunity of accompanying him on his journeys to Sahāranpūr, Delhi and other places.

During my student days, I did not get the opportunity of studying any textbook under Hadrat Shaykh al-Adab Maulānā Iʿzāz ʿAlī *rahimahullāh*. However, the final exam for *Kanz ad-Daqā'iq* was taken by him.

In the course of my stay there, I had the opportunity of attending the assemblies of Hadrat Hakīm al-Islam Maulānā Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. This two-year stay in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband proved to be very fruitful.

During this period, I maintained contact with the elders of Sahāranpūr, and also went to the *khānqāh* of Hadrat Maulānā Shāh ʿAbd al-Qādir Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh.*

I also visited Nadwatul ʿUlamā' Lucknow, and Murādābād. During my visit to Lucknow, I had the opportunity of meeting and benefiting from the following scholars: Maulānā ʿAbd al-Mājid Daryābādī, Maulānā ʿAbd al-Bārī Nadwī, Maulānā ʿAbd al-Hafīz Balyāwī, Maulānā Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAlī al-Hasanī, Dr. Āsif Kidwāi, Hakīm ʿAbd al-Qawīyy Sāhib, Maulānā Manzūr Nuʿmānī, Maulānā Muhammad al-Hasanī, and Maulānā Muhammad Uways Nadwī (the *mufassir* of Dār al-ʿUlūm) *rahimahumullāh.*

In the course of my stay in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband, I joined Maulānā ʿAmīd az-Zamān Kīrānwī and other associates to produce and publish an Arabic fortnightly periodical by the name of *al-Yaqazah.* This was probably the first Arabic periodical to come out from Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

In 1961, I accepted the invitation of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Saʿīd Buzurg Simlakī to teach in Jāmiʿah Islāmīyyah Dhābel. After teaching there for five years, I went to Dār al-ʿUlūm Falāh Dārayn in Tadkeshwar in January 1966 as a teacher. But in March of the same year, I was appointed as the principal.

HOW CAN MAN BE SUCCESSFUL?

Talk delivered in Clapton, London

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد، أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِيْ أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيْمٍ، ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِيْنَ﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

The creation is divided between the good and evil

Respected brothers! Allāh *taʿālā* created many creations and also created their qualities and peculiarities. For example, Allāh *taʿālā* created angels who are constantly in His obedience. There are countless angels whose number we do not know. Each one is appointed to a certain task, and he is not heedless of that task in the least. Some are in *rukūʿ* (bowing posture), others in prostration, and yet others are carrying out some other order. There is absolute obedience in them and nothing else.

Then there is another creation on earth which has the qualities of rebellion and disobedience in it. This creation is itself astray, and leads others astray as well. These are the *shayāṯīn* (devils) and jinn. The properties and traits of rebellion and disobedience are in them.

There is yet another creation of Allāh *taʿālā* whom Allāh *taʿālā* conferred with the honour of being *ashraf al-makhlūqāt* (the most honourable of all creations). Allāh *taʿālā* combined two qualities in this creation, viz. the qualities of angels, and the traits of Satan and jinn. This creation is known as man.

When those who are living in this world at present, and those who passed away in different eras of the past attach themselves to a Prophet of Allāh *taʿālā* and endeavour to live their lives in accordance with the revelation sent down by Allāh *taʿālā*, they reach very high levels of loftiness. They reach such heights, that they even surpass the angels. Angels do not have desires, they do not experience hunger, they do not have a need for marriage, and the other needs which we have are not experienced by them. Thus, it is not astonishing if they are fully occupied in obedience [to Allāh *taʿālā*]. After all, Allāh *taʿālā* created them expressly for this purpose.

On the other hand, Allāh *taʿālā* made man a conglomeration of both qualities, and placed many things in his natural constitution. For example, he feels hungry, thirsty, he feels hot and cold, he has a need to get married, Allāh *taʿālā* placed love for children in him. If he attaches himself to Allāh *taʿālā* while taking all these factors into consideration and occupies himself in Allāh's worship, his rank become very high and elevated. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِيْ أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيْمٍ

"We created man in the best of moulds."

Allāh *taʿālā* placed many qualities in man.

Guarantees for success: attachment to divine revelation and the Prophet sent by Allāh

The Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* taught man by saying: Look! You have two types of qualities in you. (1) The qualities of jinn and evil ones. For example, rebelliousness and desires. (2) The qualities of angels. For example, worship and obedience. Your essential objective is to create a bond with Allāh *taʿālā* through worship and obedience. To create a conviction with regard to the life of the Hereafter, and to bear in mind that this worldly life is only for a few days. We will have to leave this world. We have been sent to this world merely as a test and examination. This world is only a *dār al-imtiḫān* (a place of tests). This world is a place of sowing for the Hereafter. Our harvest in the Hereafter will depend on how we sow in this world. We have come into this world so that we do deeds in a manner which causes Allāh *taʿālā* to be pleased with us, and so that our life in the Hereafter – which is an eternal life – becomes excellent.

But whenever man severed his relationship from Allāh *taʿālā*, when he distanced himself from divine revelation, and did not take benefit from the light of prophet-hood, he fell to such an extent that he became worse than animals. So man either

surpasses the angels through worship and obedience, or becomes worse than the devils through rebellion and disobedience. This is a unique and strange condition of man. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِيْنَ

"We then reduced him to the lowest of the low."

In other words, he goes to the lowest levels. He begins to have evil desires, and he stoops to such animalistic acts which even animals do not commit. Man will resort to killing his own brothers, he will slaughter his parents, he will kill his wife and children, he will cast small innocent children into the fire. These are all acts which are lower than humaneness.

I have just heard of the situation here. You people must be hearing of the situation in India and other places on a daily basis. A person who has been bestowed with the slightest bit of perception and the slightest bit of compassion can never stoop so low as to snatch a 3-4 year old child which is playing in it's mother's lap and fling it into a fire while the mother looks on helplessly. Just try and imagine what must be going through that mother's mind! We are not talking of just one or two, rather thousands are thrown alive into fires and burnt alive. But those who are perpetrating this do not feel anything. This is the pit of man's downfall.

There is nothing to be happy about the many large universities which have been opened, the world

progressing a lot, science making many discoveries, and man having reached the top level. This is nothing to be proud about. Man is leaving the path of prophet-hood and abandoning the ways of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. Despite all the [material] progress which he is making, he has fallen to such pits which are beyond our imagination.

The most despicable action

I was in Gujarat between 28 February and 10 March. I cannot even describe the heart-rending incidents which took place. I seek the protection and sanctity of Allāh *taʿālā*. Shops are being broken down, *masājid* are being burnt, copies of the Qur'ān are being torn and thrown about, our mothers and sisters are being dishonoured, innocent children are burnt and chopped. We received such information which leaves us confounded. There was a man who was absolutely weak and ill. He could not even get up from his bed. Yet, he was carried with his bed, thrown into a fire, and reduced to ash. Human beings were thrown into fires just as sticks, straw and grass are thrown in fires. This is the most despicable action and the most uncouth thing to do. There can be nothing worse than this. A person becomes so hard-hearted, so barbaric, and he reaches such a pit of bestiality that he kills humans just like him with his hands, throws them with his hands into a fire and burns them alive!? Even if his beliefs and ideas are different, a human cannot stoop to such a level.

Look at how much effort Rasūlullāh *s̱allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* put in, and then elevated the

humans of his time to a lofty level of character. When the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* used to go out for jihād, he would instruct them saying: "Do not kill an old and weak person. Do not kill a monk who is occupied in worship in his monastery. Do not chop down any tree. Do not raise your hands against women and children." Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "It is not permissible for a Muslim to burn anything which has a life." For example, it is not permissible for us to kill ants by burning them with an electric current [or any other burning medium]. A religion does not permit the burning of ants, yet its adherents are treated in such a bestial way that petrol is poured over their children, women, and the aged; and they are burnt alive. Tell me! Can there be any barbarism and savagery worse than this?

My dear friends! The conditions throughout the world are becoming very bad. Man is not progressing, but retrogressing. Thousands of books are printed, thousands of magazines and periodicals are published, and huge universities and colleges are opened. Consequently, we think we are moving forward, and making a lot of progress in science and technology. Whereas we are retrogressing. All this is because we are deprived of prophetic sciences, and because we are separating ourselves from divine revelation. All these things are proving harmful to man. If there was a bond with divine revelation and if there was a connection with Allāh *taʿālā*, these same things [scientific and technological advances] would have been beneficial to man. But now, these things which were made for his progress are being

used to burn man. The ease of gas was provided so that it will be easy for women to prepare meals at home. There will be no need to go out and pick firewood. The smoke which results from the burning of firewood will not harm their eyes. But now, the very same gas which was for man's benefit is being used for his destruction. The sole reason for this is that man is not thinking about the Hereafter, and he has no connection with Allāh *taʿālā*.

An empty claim

On one hand they [Hindus] claim that their religion is based on two things, viz. Ahinsā and Diyā. In Hindi, an absence of fanaticism is known as Ahinsā, and Diyā means soft-heartedness. In other words, we are not harsh to anyone. Instead, we are soft-hearted to him. They claim that they do not kill animals because killing them is against soft-heartedness. Now look! They are so considerate towards animals, yet they are destroying humans; and that too, so heartlessly. What kind of policy is this? Listen to their claims, yet look at their actions!

Tests will continue

The manner in which Muslims are treated is not something new. This has been continuing since before. The Qur'ān informs us that when Muslims shift away from the straight path, Allāh *taʿālā* warns them. He says:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوْعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الأَمْوَالِ وَالأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرٰتِ ؕ وَبَشِّرِ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ اَلَّذِيْنَ إِذَآ أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌ ۙ قَالُوْآ إِنَّا للهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُوْنَ

"We shall most certainly test you through a little fear, and through hunger, and through loss in riches, lives and fruits. And give glad tidings to those who are patient. Who, when any calamity befalls them, say: 'We are the property of Allāh alone, and to Him alone we are to return.'" (Sūrah al-Baqarah, 2: verses 155-156)

You will experience hunger and fear, you will experience shortage in wealth and fruits, and there will be a decrease in your lives. Today we are overtaken by fear, hunger has afflicted us, we are losing lives, and we are suffering losses which amount to millions of rupees.

The first condition for success: return to Allāh

In the light of the present conditions, there is a severe need for two things: (1) we must return to Allāh *ta'ālā* in the true sense of the word. This is the lesson we learn from the life of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. When he experienced any stress and calamity, he would turn to Allāh *ta'ālā*. When he was faced with any difficult issue or matter, he would hasten towards s̲alāh. He would perform two *rak'ats* of s̲alāh and beg of Allāh *ta'ālā*.

The extent of Rasūlullāh's *s̲allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* servitude

During his journey to T̲ā'if, the leaders of this town turned the dregs and scum of their society against

him. They taunted him and threw rocks on him to the extent that his feet flowed with blood which coagulated in his blessed sandals. He was inflicted with merciless difficulties, but what did he do? When those worthless fellows left him, he proceeded to an orchard, raised his hands to Allāh *taʿālā* and made *duʿā* to him. The Final Messenger, Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, expressed such servitude and humility that a person reading this *duʿā* today after over 1 400 years will still experience a tremble in his heart. [One part of this *duʿā* is]:

يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِيْنَ، أَنْتَ رَبُّ الْمُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ

"O the most Merciful of those who show mercy, You are the Rabb of the weak and downtrodden."

Look at the extent of servitude and humility with which Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* turned to Allāh *taʿālā*. He said further on: "O Allāh! If You are not displeased with me, then I have nothing to worry about."

Today there is a need for us to wake up at night, and to cry before Allāh *taʿālā* and beseech Him. And say: "O Allāh! If You are displeased with us, it is essential for us to gain Your pleasure. But if You are not displeased with us, we do not have to bother about anyone. You are fully aware of whatever is being done to us. You are the greatest, You have power over everything, You destroyed far more powerful nations than this in the past." The Qur'ān repeatedly says:

إِنَّ اللهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ

"Surely Allāh has power over everything."

The changing of conditions is solely in Allāh's control

At present, it seems as though Muslims throughout the world are flowing like refuse and rubbish, and they have no worth whatsoever in any country. But if we turn to Allāh *taʿālā*, develop a bond with Him, wake up at night and cry before Him; then conditions can change. It is solely Allāh's *taʿālā* prerogative to turn conditions, and change bad situations into good ones. Allāh *taʿālā* gave Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* a most powerful victory in just a few years. He departed from this world after having spread Islam throughout the Arabian peninsular. From the very place where not a single person was prepared to listen to him, Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* prepared a powerful and commanding group of followers through whom Islam spread in all corners of the world.

ʿAllāmah Balādhurī *rah̲imahullāh* writes that the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* had reached the city of Bharūch in Gujarat and other areas of India in 15 A.H. If you were to go to San Francisco, which is the extreme end of America, after which there is nothing but ocean – as though the world ends there – you will find *masājid* there and the words of Allāh *taʿālā* reverberating from them.

My dear friends! So the first thing we have to do is to establish a true bond with Allāh *taʿālā* because the first condition for success in every hardship is to turn to Him alone and beseech Him.

The second condition for success: brotherly affection

The second thing which we have to do is to open our hearts and come forward to help our brothers. The situation of us Muslims is quite strange. We have televisions in our homes and we see the conditions about which I am speaking on the televisions. We see how our Muslim brothers are being treated. But our inner emotions are not waking up. When a nation reaches a level where it does not turn to Allāh *taʿālā* despite the calamities which befall it, and the desire of fellow-feeling does not awaken in it; then such a nation can neither gain salvation from hardships nor make any progress.

A spark of the Saḥābah's self-sacrifice

Our nation ought to be like the Saḥābah *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhum*. A Saḥābī relates: A group of people came to Musjid-e-Nabawī at the beginning of the day and presented themselves before Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. They had no clothes on their bodies, no shoes, and the effects of hunger were clearly visible on their faces. When Rasūlullāh *ṣallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* looked at them, the expression of his blessed face changed to one of grief. Looking at them had a deep impact on his heart. He asked Ḥaḍrat Bilāl *raḍiyallāhu ʿanhu* to announce that everyone must gather in the musjid.

Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* addressed the people after the announcement was made. He said to the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum*: "Look at your brothers and the condition in which they are." The hearts of the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* were filled with *īmān*, and so, they brought whatever they had. Whether it was one or two dirhams, or whatever food they had available, they presented it. The Ans̲ār brought huge baskets of grain. Eventually, there two huge heaps of grain and clothes.

The demand of *īmān*

Look! Some people in difficulty came to Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he perceived their difficulty, and directed the attention of the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* towards their difficulty. The S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* went immediately to their houses, and came back with whatever they had. This resulted in two huge heaps of food and other necessities. The narrations state that when Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* saw this spirit of extending a helping hand in the Muslims, his face beamed with joy just like the glittering shine of the moon.

This is the demand of *īmān*. When Muslims witness such situations, they leave everything, and reduce their own expenses. If they are used to eating two curries at a time, they reduce it to one. If they have ten sets of clothing, they give five sets to their fellow brothers in difficulty. They do not wait for any appeal in this regard.

Work with mutual consultation

Our condition has retrogressed to such an extent that if we collect some pounds, we fight among each other with regard to who we should donate it to. I went to a certain place a few days ago – I am talking about a place here in England – and I was very pained at what I heard. I said to my self: "O Allāh! What is happening to this *ummah*!?"

The people of this place informed me thus: "Maulānā, you came here a few days ago and requested a few brothers to make a collection and send it to the people of our village [in India]. We made a collection, but there is now a fight over who should send it and to which group we should send it? Some people are saying we must send it to such and such organization, others are saying we must send it to some other organization."

Is this the only way of our progress – to fight and argue over every trivial issue? These times require unity. The situation demands us to put our heads together and do work through mutual consultation. The Muslims throughout the world are experiencing problems. We have to combat this by casting aside our minor differences and coming together on a single platform.

My dear friends! We are arguing over trivial issues and causing partisanship. This person is from such and such village, this person is from such and such country, this person belongs to such and such group, etc. etc. Islam does not teach this. Instead, a Hadīth states:

المسلم أخو المسلم

"One Muslim is a brother to another Muslim."

I just learnt recently that a certain person donated a large sum of money for helping the downtrodden, and said: "Don't ever mention that I donated this amount." This is the type of enthusiasm we ought to have. This is what the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* used to do. They never thought we gave such an amount of money, and yet our names were not mentioned. This is not good.

Living nations are vigilant

My dear friends! There is no end to the heedlessness in which the Muslims are. On the other hand, every type of preparations are being made against us. They have lists of which houses belong to the Muslims, the number of people living in each house, the businesses which belong to Muslims, the amount and type of goods which the businesses have, etc. They come out with the detailed lists and cause havoc within minutes. They reduce our lives, wealth, honour, dignity, and everything else to ash. Some shops had goods worth millions of rupees, they burnt it in a systematic way, and reduced it to ash. While the Muslims do not know what is happening. Muslims spend night and day in front of the television, Muslim youth are lost in their own world, and they know nothing of what is happening around them and what conspiracies are planned against them. Whereas living nations remain vigilant. They are not so heedless. Just look at the media and

think and ponder for a moment. If a single person from among them has to die, they will make a noise and clamour for one full month. But if 50 000 of our people suffer and die in some place, we do not even know of it. We cannot even write a letter of consolation to the president of the country.

How should we express our displeasure?

I was in India during the communal riots [in Gujarat]. I phoned several people in different countries to send telegrams, faxes and e-mails by the thousands to the Indian government, asking them what is happening to humanity? Why are humans being treated in this manner in the 21st century? We ought to be restless in this regard. I phoned a person after having phoned him two days before that, and asked him whether they did anything about what I requested. He replied that a few people did. This is how numb and insensitive we have become. Fifty to sixty thousand people had to flee their homes with just clothes on their bodies, and are living helplessly with the sky as their roof, but we cannot even write letters of complaint!

I am not asking you to go and fight. But you can at least express your disapproval. When a wrong is being committed, and the law allows us to express our disapproval, why don't we do it?

My dear brothers! The silence, insensitivity, and unconcern of Muslims is harming them. Muslims have to remain vigilant. Our youngsters must have courage, they must have practical wisdom. We have to bring the intelligent and educated class of the

outsiders closer to us, we have to bring them to the same table, and ask them: “Why are your inner recesses not experiencing any pain? When just two of your people die, you create an uproar. Here you have people dying mercilessly in the thousands, and there is not a single person to cry out!? Just think! Petrol is poured over a small baby and it is burnt alive right in front of it’s mother. How that innocent child must have died screaming and crying!? What must have been going through the mother at the time?”

My dear brothers! We ourselves have become numb and insensitive. We will only be able to sensitize others when we have some feeling in us. ʿAllāmah Iqbāl rightly said: “Bless us with perception in the effects of calamity.” ʿAllāmah Iqbāl is making *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā*: “O Allāh! Bless this nation with perception. They do not even have any perception.”

We are so terrified at the moment that we do not speak out the truth. We fear being labelled as terrorists, and be included in the list of terrorists.

An organized conspiracy against the Muslims

A few days ago I went to the market to buy something. A British youngster was standing nearby, and as I passed by him he said: “Usāmah bin Lādin.” This is the situation. But we have to prove through our character and mannerisms that we are not terrorists. Rather, we are the followers of Raẖmatul lil ʿĀlamīn *s̱allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* [the Prophet who came as a mercy to the worlds]. Our hearts are filled with affection for everyone. We

do not say that we must only have feelings for Muslims. Instead, if a non-Muslim is treated unjustly, we will state that it is wrong. We do not like oppression for even non-Muslims. Our Prophet s̱allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam was sent to everyone. The Muslims are certainly not like this. Rather, it is an organized conspiracy against the Muslims. It is the power of the media which is being used to discredit and malign this huge nation [of Muslims] who are present throughout the world by the millions. They are being told that there is no nation which is worse than the Muslims. They have to be wiped out, they have to be chopped up, they have to be destroyed, they have to be banished from their homes, their countries have to be snatched away from them.

Shake the hearts of people

My dear brothers! What can I say? My heart is in so much of pain and discomfort at the moment that I cannot speak. You were here, while I was there [in India] and witnessed acts of barbarism with my own eyes. I saw those large groups of people who were displaced from their homes and were lying outside at the doors of others, without any support and help. For Allāh's sake, for Allāh's sake, do the work which you have to do. The educated people must come forward. They must shake the hearts and emotions of people and inform them that the entire humanity is treading the wrong path. If this continues, humanity will suffer terribly. This is not an issue which concerns only Muslims, Christians or Hindus. Rather, it is an issue concerning all of humanity. The whole of humanity is heading towards

destruction. We have to say these things. We cannot desist from saying them out of fear of being accused. When a Muslim speaks, he speaks the truth. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to proclaim the truth. Āmīn.

Conclusion

My dear brothers! The gist of what I said today is that we have to do two things, viz. (1) return to Allāh *taʿālā*, come to the *masājid*, cry before Allāh *taʿālā*, beseech Him and beg Him.

(2) The other thing is to apply the practical steps which are to be taken and utilize the appropriate means and measures which are used by nations of the world at present. If you confine yourself to remaining and crying in the musjid, it will not help. You must understand well that if we just sit back and cry, we will not achieve anything. We will also have to employ those plans and strategies which are suited to the occasion, through which we can awaken the emotions of the world. We will have to direct ourselves to the world through talks, through the pen, through the radio and television. It is the responsibility of each person to endeavour according to his capabilities in his respective field. We must spend our monies, organize seminars, and ask the people: Does your sentiment permit you to speak about human rights on one hand, and strive to break and destroy human rights on the other hand? For how long can this double standard continue in this world? You should therefore put an end to it.

May Allāh *taʿālā* bless the Muslims with correct understanding. May He bestow them with courage,

and inspire them to return to Him. Āmīn. O the most Merciful of those who show mercy.

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنِ الْحَمْدُ للهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ

Our final supplication is that all praise is due to Allāh, the Rabb of the universe.

THE MERIT OF MEMORIZING THE QUR'ĀN

Talk delivered in Dār al-ʻUlūm London, Cant, on the occasion of completing the memorization of the Qur'ān

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد، أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿الم، ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ، هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

A unique arrangement for the protection of the Qur'ān

Honourable *asātidhah* (teachers and lecturers), respected guests, and my dear brothers! In today's assembly, one of our students is about to complete the Qur'ān. *Māshā Allāh*, he will have the good fortune of completing the *hifẕ* (memorization) of the Qur'ān. It is a very great fortune when Allāh *taʻālā* inspires a child to memorize the entire Qur'ān. The entire history of this *ummah* demonstrates that it had an extraordinary bond with the Qur'ān in every era and every region, and that Allāh *taʻālā* laid down a system for its protection. Books and scriptures were revealed to the different Prophets *ʻalayhimus salām* who came into this world. The Zabūr, Taurāh and Injīl were also revealed. But Allāh *taʻālā* did not

promise to safeguard and protect any book. Only with regard to this book, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُوْنَ

"It is We who revealed the admonition [Qur'ān] and it is We who are its protectors."

Consequently, Allāh *taʿālā* created a desire and love for the Qur'ān in the hearts of people. People memorize it – and that too – people whose language is not Arabic. We are known as ʿAjamī (non-Arabs). Some of us speak Gujarati, others speak English, others speak Persian, and yet others speak various other languages. But look at this unique system of Allāh *taʿālā* where a non-Arab child memorizes the Qur'ān, and that too, at a very young age.

I live in an apartment in Canada, and there is a five year old child who has not even taken admission in a *maktab* (primary *madrasah*) as yet. But he has memorized the entire Qur'ān. When I look at this child, the thought crosses my mind that Allāh *taʿālā* is saying to the inhabitants of this earth: Look! This is a miracle of the Qur'ān. No matter which religion you look at, you will not find a five year old child of that religion having memorized his religious book. You will not find a five year old child reading the entire Bible from memory. This is solely the miracle of the Qur'ān. This is Allāh's *taʿālā* system; He is showing mankind how He makes arrangements for the protection of this Book. No one in the world can obliterate this Book. It has come with such sciences regarding which no one can have any doubts,

misgivings or reservations. “This is a Book in which there is no doubt.”

All the sciences of this world have certain doubts. But this Book and all its sciences have no doubt whatsoever.

Senior scientists present certain theories in this world. But fifty years later another scientist arrives on the scene and says that what was written by him fifty years ago was wrong. The correct and new theory is what I am presenting. Countless theories of this world have already changed. But you cannot show a single letter of the Qur’ān which has changed. No person can say with regard to any Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* that it has changed with the passage of time. This can never happen. It will remain exactly as it was from his time until the day of Resurrection. There will be no change in it whatsoever.

Two days ago I was reading an article in your *Jang* newspaper that several doctors did research and concluded that there are fewer cases of AIDS in a nation which has the practice of circumcision. So I said: “Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* demonstrated this research since time immemorial. And it continues in our Muslim society solely as a Sunnah. Only now, the British and American doctors are telling us that these are its benefits. Whereas we thought that this was a Sunnah of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* alone. But look at the wisdom behind these Sunnats which researchers are expounding today.

Merits of a *h̲āfiz̲ al-Qur'ān*

Nevertheless, it is a great fortune to safeguard the Qur'ān in one's heart. The person enjoys a very high rank. My dear friends! If a child becomes a *h̲āfiz̲ al-Qur'ān*, practises on it, and lives his life according to the injunctions, orders and prohibitions mentioned in it; Allāh *taʿālā* will accord him special treatment on the day of Resurrection. His parents will be made to wear a crown, and Allāh *taʿālā* will give the child the right of intercession. And so, he will intercede on behalf of several members of his family. This is the gist of what is mentioned in the Ah̲ādīth.

The honour which Allāh *taʿālā* conferred on a *h̲āfiz̲ al-Qur'ān* has not been conferred for any degree of this world. Nowhere will you find that if a person becomes a scientist, he will be guaranteed entry into Paradise. In no book will you find that if a person becomes a senior doctor or specialist, he will receive high ranks in Paradise. But Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said with regard to a child who memorizes the Qur'ān: "It will be said to him on the day of Resurrection: 'Continue reading and climbing the levels of Paradise.'" These glad tidings are solely for a *h̲āfiz̲ al-Qur'ān.* He is most fortunate.

A strange story about memorizing the Qur'ān

Our Gujarat had a famous king by the name of Mah̲mūd Bīghrā *rah̲imahullāh.* He used to call the *ʿulamā'* to his assembly every week and listen to their conversations related to *Dīn.* The kings of those days were very religious. So *ʿulamā'* were seated in his assembly and they were talking about *h̲ifz̲-e-*

Qur'ān (committing the Qur'ān to memory) and its merits. They spoke about a *h̲āfiz̲* interceding on behalf of several of his family members, and through his intercession, Allāh *taʿālā* will protect them from the Hell-fire. Sulṯān Mah̲mūd took a deep breath and said: "If only a child in Sulṯān Mah̲mūd's family was a *h̲āfiz̲-e-Qur'ān*."

Look! He was the king of Gujarat, yet he was expressing remorse over the absence of a *h̲āfiz̲* in his family. His son, who later became known as Muz̲affar Shāh H̲alīm, was present in the assembly. He saw his father's grief over the absence of a *h̲āfiz̲* in his family, and made a firm resolution to become a *h̲āfiz̲*. Not very long thereafter, his father appointed him as the governor of Chānpānīr, a place close to Baroda. This is a mountainous region and people visit it to this day. There are forts there, and school children go there on excursions.

When Muz̲affar went to Chānpānīr, he dedicated all his spare time to memorizing the Qur'ān. His efforts soon bore fruit and he completed the entire Qur'ān. Look! He is the king's son and is himself a governor of a region. He has all the wealth, treasures, and servants at his beck and call. But he saw his father's wish of his becoming a *h̲āfiz̲*, and of gaining salvation in the Hereafter through him. Why, then, should he not make his father happy by becoming a *h̲āfiz̲*?

It is recorded that he worked so hard in this regard, that his eyes would become red. His servants would say to him: "*H̲ud̲ūr* (Sir), why are you striving so

hard when Allāh *ta'ālā* did not impose on any person to do more than what is within his capacity?

لاَ يُكَلِّفُ اللهُ نَفْسًا إِلاَّ وُسْعَهَا

"Allāh does not impose on a soul more than what is in it's capacity."

The people of those times were highly educated [in Islamic sciences]. They used to quote verses of the Qur'ān and say to him that he was over-exerting himself. He replied: "Even if I were to lose my eye-sight by memorizing the Qur'ān, I would give preference to memorizing it over losing my eye-sight." And so, he strove very hard, and when the month of Ramaḏān approached, he presented himself before his father in Aẖmadābād and said: "My dear father! If you permit me, I will lead the *tarāwīẖ ṯalāh*." The father asked: "How will you do that!?" He replied: "Just permit me." He was given permission, and he read the entire Qur'ān in the *tarāwīẖ ṯalāh* all by his self.

Maẖmūd Bīghrā was so overjoyed that when he completed the Qur'ān in the *tarāwīẖ ṯalāh*, he prepared an elaborate banquet in his honour.

Our elders' attention to expressing joy over the memorization of the Qur'ān

When Ḫaḏrat Maulānā Sayyid Ḫusayn Aẖmad Madanī's *raẖimahullāh* younger son, Maulānā Arshad, was a young boy and memorizing the Qur'ān, then Ḫaḏrat Madanī *raẖimahullāh* used to distribute sweetmeats after each *pārā* which his son

completed memorizing. Our elders were very particular in this regard. They would think to themselves: “My son has memorized another *pārā*, let me distribute some sweetmeats.” When he completed the entire Qur’ān, Hadrat invited a large number of people. His attachment to the Qur’ān can be gauged from this.

When Hāfiz Ibn Hajar *rahimahullāh* completed writing *Fath al-Bārī*, he invited 300 *‘ulamā’*. When Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Sāhib *rahimahullāh* completed his commentary to *Bukhārī Sharīf*, he went to pains in preparing a large banquet.

So we learn from this that our elders used to be overjoyed at the completion of a *Dīnī* task. As for completing the memorization of the Qur’ān, this is something else. It is a very great treasure. Kingship of this world and all the treasures of this world can be placed on one side, and just the memorization of the Qur’ān is placed on the other side. This is very great. It is a grand means of goodness and blessings in a house. All you who are memorizing the Qur’ān have to be congratulated. May Allāh *ta‘ālā* enable you to complete your *hifz*, and keep it safeguarded in your chests forever. *Āmīn.*

***Taqwā* is the only criterion in Allāh’s sight**

My dear brothers! We have to memorize the Qur’ān with sincerity and to please Allāh *ta‘ālā*. We must not aim to become a good *hāfiz* or *qārī* for the sake of monetary gain. This should not be our goal. The Qur’ān is a sanctified Book of Allāh *ta‘ālā* which changes the lives of people.

Look! Self-worship and ignorance was widespread in the world. The entire world was separated into different bits. One was an Ausī, another was a Khazrajī, another was a Qurayshī, another was something else. People were divided into different tribes. But the Qur'ān united them all. The Qur'ān came and brought different nations into a single row. Allāh *taʿālā* clearly states in this regard:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوْبًا وَّقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوْا. إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ.

"O people! We created you from a male and a female. And We made you into groups and tribes so that you may recognize each other. Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allāh is the most righteous of you." (Sūrah al-Hujurāt, 49: 13)

A person will be honoured by Allāh *taʿālā* on the basis of *taqwā*. The Qur'ān conveyed this message to the entire human race, and taught humanity that family, place of residence and language are not of importance. These are things for mutual recognition. *Taqwā* is the sole criterion in Allāh's sight. If an Abyssinian is absolutely black in complexion but has *taqwā* in him, he is worthy of becoming our *imām*. If there is another person from a distinguished tribe, and he is a very wealthy person; but has no *taqwā*, then he has no value in Allāh's sight. This is the message which the Qur'ān gives to us:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

"Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allāh is the most righteous of you."

The only treatment for our downfall

My dear brothers! Understand the Qur'ān. It has elevated many nations of the world. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said:

إِنَّ اللهَ يَرْفَعُ بِهَذَا الْكِتَابِ أَقْوَامًا وَيَضَعُ بِهِ آخَرِيْنَ

"Allāh shall elevate nations through this Book, and He will debase other nations through it [for having abandoned and rejected it]."

Today we are downtrodden in the world and debased in the sight of the world. All this is because we have abandoned the Qur'ān. Had we held on firmly to the Qur'ān, upheld the bonds of kinship and love as established by the Qur'ān, valued the pure and chaste social life given to us by the Qur'ān, and embraced the injunctions of the Qur'ān, we would have been in an elevated and lofty position today.

The importance of cleanliness in Islam

There was a huge assembly in Surat just two weeks ago. Many educated people were present. I addressed them and said: "It is most painful to see that although we are Muslims, we do not bother about cleanliness. Whereas our Qur'ān says to us:

إِنَّ اللهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِيْنَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ

"Surely Allāh loves those who are constant in repentance, and those who are concerned about cleanliness."

But if you go to the villages and areas inhabited by Muslims, you will find them filled with rubbish and refuse. Go and see some of our distinguished institutes of learning, and you will see heaps of refuse lying outside. Listen! The Qur'ān is telling us that Allāh *taʿālā* loves those who are clean. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is saying:

نَظِّفُوْا أَفْنِيَتَكُمْ

"Keep your courtyards clean."

This is what the Hadīth is instructing us, yet we are acting against it. Is this what Islam teaches us? The Qur'ān is issuing an instruction which is further supported by the Hadīth, yet we are acting to the contrary. It has now become the sign of Muslims. Go to any Muslim neighbourhood and you will see rubbish thrown around, goats moving around, old sheets and *lungīs* (loin cloths) hanging about. People immediately conclude that this is a Muslim neighbourhood. Go to any English neighbourhood, you will see it spotlessly clean, there will be gardens in front of the homes, their homes will be well-kept, and you will not see any rubbish lying around.

Just yesterday I went to a musjid to perform salāh. I saw a lot of rubbish lying around in the neighbourhood. I thought to myself, even after coming here to England, our brains have not become clean. I am therefore addressing you specifically. For Allāh's sake, understand the Qur'ān. For Allāh's sake, understand the Hadīth. For Allāh's sake, understand the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The Qur'ān and Hadīth do not teach us to remain dirty. If rubbish is lying around in our musjid courtyard or outside our *masājid*, we are creating a wrong impression to these people. They will think that we cannot even keep our religious places clean.

I visited Bolton about 2-3 years ago. We performed salāh and came out of the musjid. Hadrat Maulānā Abrār al-Haqq Sāhib *rahimahullāh* (of Hardoi) was also present in the musjid. When Hadrat came out of the musjid, he saw rubbish lying around. Hadrat stood up and said: "Brothers! Are any of this musjid's trustees present here?" The people replied: "Yes." Hadrat said: "Call him here." Some more people came out of the musjid and assembled around Hadrat. The trustee also came out. Hadrat asked him: "Are you a trustee of this musjid?" He replied: "Yes." Hadrat asked: "If such rubbish was left lying outside your house would you have approved of it?" He replied: "No, Hadrat." Hadrat said: "Why, then, do you approve of it outside the house of Allāh!? Very well, all of you get together and pick it up." In this way, Hadrat got them all to take the rubbish away.

H̲ad̲rat actually wanted to show us how little we realize that we are living in this country (Britain) where people require us to keep our rooms and yards clean. Yet, we throw paper wherever we feel like, cast cigarette packs wherever we want, whereas our Qur'ān says:

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِيْنَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ

"Surely Allāh loves those who are constant in repentance, and those who are concerned about cleanliness."

If we make *taubah* (repent) the filth of our heart will be removed. And if we remain clean, the filth of our external selves will be removed. When a person cries before Allāh *taʿālā*, his sins are washed off. So purify your hearts first and then your external selves. Just look at the eloquence of the Qur'ān. A person just needs to ponder and reflect over it. Whenever I read this verse, I am overjoyed and my heart tells me that this is what you call the speech of Allāh!

When our heart becomes clean, peace and tranquillity will be established in the world. When a person's heart is filthy, he fights with others, tries to snatch things which belong to others, speaks harshly to others, etc. But if the heart is pure and clean, disputes and arguments come to an end – as was the condition of the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum*.

Someone asked H̲ad̲rat Ibn Masʿūd *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu*:

صِفْ لَنَا أَصْحَابَ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ

"Describe the Companions of Rasūlullāh <u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam to us."

He replied:

أبرهم قلوبا، وأعمقهم علما، وأصدقهم لهجة

"They were purest of heart, deepest in knowledge, and most truthful in speech."

In other words, there was no filth in their hearts. Their knowledge was firm. One must not just read a few books superficially and think that he has now become a Maulānā, he now has a *sanad* (mandate), Maulānā Mu<u>st</u>afā <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib has signed it, etc. Knowledge has to be firmly entrenched. When you memorize the Qur'ān, memorize it thoroughly. Memorize it with *tajwīd*.

Memorize the Qur'ān with *tajwīd*

ʿAllāmah Jazarī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* says:

والأخذ بالتجويد حتم لازم – من لم يُجَوِّد القرآن آثم

"It is essential to read the Qur'ān with tajwīd. The person who does not read the Qur'ān with tajwīd is a sinner."

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيْلاً

"and recite the Qur'ān distinctly."

Thus, when a person memorizes the Qur'ān, he must give due consideration to *tajwīd*. He must read at a slow pace and memorize correctly. Do not read so fast that the people following you in *tarāwīh salāh* do not even know what you are reading. My dear brothers! This is Allāh's speech. The sanctity of Allāh's speech must be in our hearts. We must read it while having its greatness before us.

An etiquette concerning the Qur'ān

When you read the Qur'ān, think to yourself that you are reading the speech of Allāh *taʿālā* – the most affectionate Sustainer. It is the speech of the Almighty Allāh. Respect for Allāh *taʿālā* must be in your heart. When the Qur'ān is being recited anywhere, listen to it with utmost attention. This has an effect on one's temperament. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوْا لَهُ وَأَنْصِتُوْا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ

"When the Qur'ān is recited, listen to it and remain silent; perhaps you may be shown mercy."

When we have gatherings and the Qur'ān is recited, the majority of people continue with their own conversations. Whereas this is disrespectful to the

Qur'ān. Sometimes, the Qur'ān is read at the beginning of a gathering so that the people who are lounging around outside may come inside and get seated. So the Qur'ān is being used to gather people. The organizers say: "Get a few children to read the Qur'ān so that people can start coming inside and get seated." This is not correct.

My dear brothers! The Qur'ān was not revealed for this purpose. It was revealed as a reminder and an admonishment. When people of the past used to listen to the Qur'ān, tears would flow from their eyes. The words of the Qur'ān reduce a person to crying and sobbing. In the *fajr salāh* of this morning, our *imām* read the Qur'ān in such a beautiful manner that it affected me. What excellent verses Allāh *taʿālā* revealed in the Qur'ān! When a person reads it or listens to it with concentration, his heart trembles. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يَآ أَيُّهَا الإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيْمِ

"O man! What has enticed you away from your gracious Sustainer?" (Sūrah al-Infitār, 82: 6)

Just look at the style of the Qur'ān. When a person listens attentively to the Qur'ān, ponders over its eloquence, and looks at the words which Allāh *taʿālā* uses for His servants, he will definitely be affected by it. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* used to be affected by it. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to a Sahābī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* on one occasion: "Read the Qur'ān to me." He said: "O Rasūlullāh! The Qur'ān

was revealed to you, and I must read it to you!?" Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* replied: "I like to listen to it from others." So the Sahābī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* began reciting Sūrah an-Nisā', and when he reached this verse:

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيْدٍ وَّجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلٰى هٰٓؤُلَآءِ شَهِيْدًا

"How will it be then, when We shall summon from every community a witness, and We shall summon you as a witness over these people?" (Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 41)

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said to him: "Enough." When the Sahābī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* looked at him, he saw tears flowing from his eyes.

The unique effect and impact of the Qur'ān

Even if you were to read the Qur'ān before a non-Muslim while according full respect to the Qur'ān and reading it in a good and beautiful tone, he will certainly be affected by it. Two years ago, a programme was held in a large hall in America. People of all faiths were invited, and each of their religious books were read out. Christian priests, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims and others were all assembled. After this programme, I read in a newspaper that when the books of each of the other religions were being read, it did not have any impact on the audience. But when a *qārī* read *Aʿūdhu billāh* and *Bismillāh*, the entire hall was silenced and people felt a unique condition. The Qur'ān has a unique effect.

My dear friends! If you read the Qur'ān in a society and environment where people do not understand the Qur'ān – but you read it while bearing in mind Allāh's greatness – it will certainly have an effect on their hearts. Even today, the Qur'ān has the same effect as it had over 1 400 years ago.

Do not have an inferiority complex

Read the Qur'ān correctly, understand it correctly, and feel proud over the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* sent you to the *madrasah* to study the Qur'ān. Do not consider yourself to be worthless. Do not think that you are attached to *'ulamā'*, and so you have no value in this world. If the world does not value you, let it be so. You are certainly valuable in Allāh's sight. When you depart from this world, you will come to know what value you have in His sight. At that time, the entire world will regret, and say: "If only all my children were *h̲āfiẕ* of the Qur'ān. The high ranks which you will receive for memorizing the Qur'ān is beyond anyone's imagination.

You must put in all your efforts on the words of the Qur'ān, its meanings, it sciences – i.e. *tafsīr*, H̲adīth, *fiqh*, etc. – and do your utmost to acquire all this. May Allāh *taʿālā* give you the inspiration to do it. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this child who has just completed the *h̲ifẕ* of the Qur'ān. May Allāh *taʿālā* also reward the *madrasah* authorities for establishing this *madrasah* in this country after so much of striving.

The Qur'ān cannot be obliterated

Look! This is also a trust from Allāh *taʿālā*. These people [British] came into our country, India, and tried to put an end to the Qur'ān. They bought thousands of copies of the Qur'ān in Delhi and burnt them. They thought to themselves that as long as the Qur'ān remains with the Muslims, Islamic sentiments will remain in them. This is why they tried in vain to put an end to the Qur'ān. Someone said to them: "Don't be stupid. Even if you were to burn hundreds and thousands of copies of the Qur'ān, it will not make any difference." They asked: "Why is that?" The person summoned a small child and asked them to listen to him reading the Qur'ān. When the child read the Qur'ān [from memory], these people were astounded, and said: "This Qur'ān is in the hearts of little children!?"

There are times when it will not even pass your mind and imagination that here is a small child who has memorized the entire Qur'ān. You will find many small children who memorized the Qur'ān. This is a miracle of the Qur'ān. In short, the Qur'ān cannot be obliterated. It is an eternal miracle of Allāh *taʿālā*.

A miracle of the Qur'ān

Shaykh Majdhūb, a senior *ʿālim* of Syria, had visited our Dār al-ʿUlūm Falā<u>h</u>-e-Dārayn, Tadkeshwar. Earlier on I had informed you that Maulwī Mu<u>h</u>ammad <u>H</u>anīf Rawedarwī is going to visit us. He was a young child at the time. I presented him before the Shaykh and said: "He has memorized the entire Qur'ān." The Shaykh looked at him and was

most surprised. And he repeatedly asked: "Did he memorize the entire Qur'ān or some parts of it?" I replied: "He memorized the entire Qur'ān." The Shaykh made him read from several places. The Shaykh himself was a ẖāfiẕ and a senior *ʿālim*. When he heard him reading the Qur'ān from different places with *tajwīd* and a beautiful voice, I saw tears flowing from the Shaykh's eyes, and he was saying:

والله هذه معجزة القرآن، والله هذه معجزة القرآن

"By Allāh, this is a miracle of the Qur'ān. By Allāh, this is a miracle of the Qur'ān."

This is a non-Arab child, I tested him in so many places, and he read without any hesitation!

Those who have to be congratulated

My dear friends! You people are fortunate. You are eligible for congratulations. Allāh *taʿālā* sent you to this *madrasah*. Those who spend on this *madrasah* are fortunate. The parents have to be congratulated for having sent their children here instead of sending them to schools and colleges, and got them to memorize the Qur'ān. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless them all. May Allāh *taʿālā* fulfil their wishes and hopes, and reward them more than what they hoped for. Āmīn.

Each one of us has to try to spread the word of the Qur'ān. We must direct the attention of our house people, relatives and those whom we interact with towards the Qur'ān. We must try to live our lives according to the Qur'ān. After becoming a *ẖāfiẕ*, live

a life which is not in conflict with the injunctions of the Qur'ān.

I had quoted a statement of Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh* previously in this very same hall. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* used to say: "Whenever I see a *hāfiz* of the Qur'ān and student of a *madrasah* walking about [wasting time] in the shopping centres, I feel as if he is a crown prince on whose head the crown is about to be placed [he is about to be appointed as the king], but he goes and sits down in the shop of a cobbler."

This means that you must restrain yourself after becoming a *hāfiz* of the Qur'ān. It is not becoming of you to go about in the shopping centres. It is not becoming of you to go to theatres [and cinemas]. Allāh *taʿālā* placed the Qur'ān in your heart. Think of the greatness of the Qur'ān and do not go to such filthy and impure places. Remain dignified. When you get holidays, go and stay in the company of the pious elders so that the effulgence of the Qur'ān may enter your heart.

My dear brothers! As long as you do not go to the *Ahlullāh* (close servants of Allāh *taʿālā*) and do not remain in their company, the effulgence of *īmān* which is desired will not develop in you. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to do this. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept us. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect and help the *madrasah* in every way. May Allāh *taʿālā* reward your parents as well. This child will now complete the Qur'ān and we will then make a *duʿā* – *inshā Allāh*.

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد كما تحب وترضى وعدد ما تحب وترضى.

اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد. اللهم بارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما باركت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد.

اللهم ربنا لا تزغ قلوبنا بعد إذ هديتنا وهب لنا من لدنك رحمة إنك أنت الوهاب.

اللهم ربنا هب لنا من أزواجنا وذرياتنا قرة أعين واجعلنا للمتقين إماما.

اللهم اغفرلنا ولإخواننا الذين سبقونا بالإيمان ولا تجعل في قلوبنا غلا للذين آمنوا، ربنا انك رؤف رحيم.

اللهم إن قلوبنا ونواصينا وجوارحنا بيدك، لم تملكنا منها شيئا. فإذا فعلت ذلك بنا فكن أنت ولينا واهدنا إلى سواء السبيل. أللهم اهدنا إلى سواءِ السبيل. أللهم اهدنا إلى سواء السبيل.

اللهم اجعلنا هادين مهتدين غير ضالين ولا مضلين، سلما لأوليائك، وحربا لأعدائك.

اللهم اجعلنا من الراشدين. اللهم اجعلنا من الراشدين. اللهم اجعلنا من الراشدين.

اللهم اجعلنا من الصالحين، اللهم اجعلنا من عبادك الصالحين.

اللهم وفقنا لما تحب وترضى، اجعل آخرتنا خيرا من الأولى.

اللهم اغفرلنا ذنوبنا وإسرافنا في أمرنا وثبت أقدامنا وانصرنا على القوم الكافرين.

اللهم ارحمنا بالقرآن العظيم. اللهم ارحمنا بالقرآن العظيم. اللهم ارحمنا بالقرآن العظيم.

اللهم اجعله لنا شافعا ومشفعا. اللهم اجعله لنا شافعا ومشفعا.

O Allāh! Forgive us our sins.

O Allāh! Accept this completion of the Qur'ān.

O Allāh! Forgive his parents, relatives and teachers.

O Allāh! Give full returns to the *madrasah* people who made all these arrangements.

O Allāh! Make this child a means for the propagation of Your Book.

O Allāh! Give inspiration to other children to take the courage to complete the Qur'ān with sincerity.

O Allāh! Make the Qur'ān an intercessor in our favour.

O Allāh! Pass good decisions in our favour.

O Allāh! Enable us to understand the Qur'ān and make others to understand it.

O Allāh! Nations have become deprived of guidance. O Allāh! Enable us to present the sciences of the Qur'ān to the people of the world.

O Allāh! Make us inviters towards You.

O Allāh! Nations of the world are presently conspiring against Islam. O Allāh! Protect Islam and Muslims through Your grace.

اللهم انصر الإسلام والمسلمين، اللهم انصر الإسلام والمسلمين. اللهم أعز الإسلام والمسلمين، واخذل الكفرة والمبتدعة والمشركين، اللهم شتت شملهم، اللهم فرق جمعهم، اللهم دمر ديارهم، اللهم مزقهم كل ممزق.

اللهم الطف بنا في تيسير كل عسير فإن تيسير كل عسير عليك يسير.

اللهم ربنا تقبل منا إنك أنت السميع العليم، وتب علينا إنك أنت التواب الرحيم.

وصلى الله على خير خلقه سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين برحمتك يا أرحم الراحمين.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMPANY OF THE PIOUS

Talk delivered in Dār al-ʿUlūm London, Cant

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه وأولياء أمته إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد، أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصَّادِقِيْنَ﴾ صدق الله العظيم

A pleasing observation

Respected *ʿulamāʾ* and dear friends. I am very much pleased when I visit this Dār al-ʿUlūm. When I see the students having sacrificed their comforts and come here for acquiring knowledge of *Dīn*, and they have the enthusiasm to acquire knowledge of Islam and then convey it to the rest of the world, then I am most pleased. May Allāh *taʿālā* give you full success in all your objectives, and may He bestow this institution with much progress. Āmīn.

My dear friends! I was here previously and had shared some thoughts with you. I had explained how a student should live his life. Some of you children may remember what I said because it was not a very long time since I addressed you. I would like to share a few more thoughts in today's sitting.

Self-effacement is necessary for the acquisition of knowledge

My dear friends! The first condition of knowledge is for the person to obliterate himself. He has to humble himself before his teachers and elders. Allāh *taʿālā* wants *taqwā* to come into our lives. The manner of developing *taqwā* is mentioned in the Qur'ān, viz. we must remain in the company of the s̲ādiqīn (truthful, righteous). Allāh *taʿālā* clearly mentions two things in this verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصَّادِقِيْنَ

"O believers! Fear Allāh, and remain with the truthful."

The pious elders of *Dīn* tell us that the way of acquiring *taqwā* is in the companionship of the *Ahlullāh* (people of Allāh). No matter how much of knowledge a person acquires, as long as he does not remain in the company of the truthful and the righteous, he cannot carry out the responsibilities of *Dīn* in the correct manner. This is why our pious elders laid great emphasis on remaining in the company of the righteous when acquiring knowledge.

The need for the company of the righteous

The powerful revolution which took place in the lives of the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* was solely due to their companionship with Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* A person would embrace Islam, spend a few days with Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi*

wa sallam, and changes would take place in his life just because of these few days of companionship. The foremost reason for this was that Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* had the light of prophethood in his heart, and a strong bond with Allāh *taʿālā*. This used to have such a powerful effect on their hearts that a complete revolution would take place in their lives.

Nevertheless, there is no way of denying this companionship. Knowledge is not mere impressions [on the heart]. A person will not get as much benefit just by reading books and learning something as he would get if his knowledge was accompanied with remaining in the company of a righteous person. Today there is a severe need for us to remain in the company of the pious elders. Our pious elders consider this to be extremely important.

People from distant places and lands used to go and remain in the company of Imām Ah̲mad ibn H̲ambal *rah̲imahullāh*. These people had neither pen nor paper in their hands. They would merely sit there. The students who used to be there had pen and paper. So some students asked them the reason for their coming here, seeing that they have neither pen nor paper. They replied: "The sole purpose of our travelling to him at present is to learn the etiquette of life from him."

My dear brothers! The effects of companionship are certain and definite. Our pious elders explained this through examples.

The effect of companionship

Hakīm al-Islam Hadrat Maulānā Qārī Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh* would always say the following in his talks:

Brothers! Look here! If you were to keep small pills in your chest of clothes, and you open the chest after one week, those clothes will certainly have a smell of the pills. Had you placed roses inside the chest, you would have got the fragrance of roses from your clothes. The clothes themselves had no fragrance. But because you placed these flowers among them, the fragrance of roses emanated from your clothes."

This is solely due to the effect of companionship. Hadrat Hakīm al-Islam *rahimahullāh* would repeatedly give this example of the effect of companionship in his talks. He would always say to the students: "Remain in the company of the righteous. Students and the *'ulamā'* are in dire need of this."

Knowledge alone is not enough

Knowledge is certainly the fundamental need. But knowledge alone is not enough. Together with knowledge, the Sahābah *radiyallāhu 'anhu* got the companionship of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. This is why their knowledge developed a special type of light and effulgence. Today many people have knowledge but it has become a source of tribulation for them. They are either competing against each other, disputing over an issue, or going into debates and arguments over trivial matters. At

present, all the upheavals which are being experienced in academic circles and among the *'ulamā'* is because of no companionship with the righteous.

The guard was also one who engaged in abundant *dhikr*

There was a time in the history of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband when everyone from the Shaykh al-Hadīth down to the doorkeeper was a *dhākir* (one who engages in abundant *dhikr*). During the day, the Dār al-'Ulūm was an academic centre of learning. And if you were to walk around in the latter part of the night – at about 3-4a.m. – you will hear the sound of *dhikr* coming out from every room. This was not a very long time ago. You must have read about it in the books. And I was a personal witness to this. The first time I went to Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband was after partition in 1948. I clearly remember that even at that time, some of the doorkeepers and caretakers were *dhākir shāghil* (those who engaged in *dhikr* and spiritual exercises). And if I had to walk pass the Dār al-'Ulūm Musjid of Chattā Musjid, I would hear the sounds of *dhikr*.

My dear friends! This is most essential. We must appreciate the *sālihīn* (righteous). Wherever the *Ahlullāh* may be, we must set aside some time and go to them. To undertake a special journey to a person of knowledge or a righteous person in order to derive benefit from his company is an act of worship in itself.

Even the silence of the pious elders has an effect

There is also benefit in sitting silently with those who have a strong bond and affinity (*nisbat*) with Allāh *taʿālā*. We saw some of our elders not delivering any talk at the time of their *majlis* (assembly). I had the opportunity of going to the *khānqāh* of Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* on a few occasions. I noticed Hadrat not saying anything. He would sit on his bed and the entire assembly of people will remain seated by him from *ʿasr* to *maghrib*. Then towards the end, one of the books of Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib [Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī] *rahimahullāh* or some other pious personality will be read. If not, Hadrat used to remain silent. But the people used to feel the effect of his silence.

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth [Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā] Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was an erudite Hadīth scholar of his time. He rendered sterling services and his blessings are still experienced throughout the world. But I saw this with my own eyes: When Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* used to come to Sahāranpūr, he used to stay in Bhutt House. Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* would stop his assembly, and join the assembly of Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* would be sitting on one end of the bed, and Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* on the other end. The lecturers of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband and Sahāranpūr used to be present as well.

From this we can gauge the importance our elders attached to going to the *Ahlullāh* and spending some time in their company. When Hadrat Rāipūrī

rahimahullāh used to be in Rāipūr, Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* would make it a point of undertaking a journey to Rāipūr at least once a month.

How to change the condition of the heart

If our students and teachers make it a habit of spending time in the company of the righteous together with their academic studies and engagements, the condition of their hearts will certainly change. We cannot have any influence on others if we do not change the condition of our own hearts.

There were people who used to reject *tasawwuf* and you will find derogatory statements against *tasawwuf* in their writings. They claimed that *tasawwuf* has sickened the *ummah*. The very same people have now concluded that the correct propagation of Islam in Europe can only be done along the lines of *tasawwuf*. This is quite surprising.

Establish assemblies of *dhikr*

We now remember and understand the teachings of our pious elders. When Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to write letters to any place towards the latter part of his life, he used to instruct the people to establish assemblies of *dhikr*. When there was a strike in Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, Hadrat's letter was received in which he stated that there is a dearth of *dhikr* among the *'ulamā'*. Establish assemblies of *dhikr* and these conflicts and controversies will come to an end. This is because when Allāh's *dhikr* is made in any place, the effects of Satan are repulsed.

Nevertheless, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* specifically emphasised remaining in the company of the righteous and establishing assemblies of *dhikr*; and explained the importance of it to the *'ulamā'*. This is a most important matter, and it is most correct. As long as our hearts are not rectified, our conditions will not come right.

Blessings pour forth when you obliterate yourself

One of the *murīds* of Hadrat Aqdas [Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī] Thānwī *rahimahullāh* who later received *ijāzah* (permission to induct *murīds*) from him, wrote to him saying: "Hadrat! You have given me *ijāzah*, but my condition is such that I think to myself: 'I wish I was lying in a filthy drain and people would spit at me.' I consider myself to be absolutely worthless."

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* expressed his approval at this condition and wrote to him saying: "This is what I wish of my associates. This is how they must consider their selves."

We learn from this that as long as a person does not obliterate his self, benefit will not be derived from him. The *Ahlullāh* say great things in small and insignificant statements. Hadrat Maulānā [Hājī] Fārūq Sāhib *rahimahullāh* [of Sukkhur, Pakistan] had come and we spent forty days with him. We had the opportunity of learning many beneficial things from him. This, despite the fact we have been teaching for many years in the *madrasah*, reading many books, and I myself am in the habit of reading and studying all the time. But I realized that there

are certain things which can only be acquired from the company of these pious elders.

Take admission in the *madrasah*, but do not interfere in *madrasah* affairs

Hadrat [Hājī Fārūq Sāhib] *rahimahullāh* said to the students: "O students! Listen to a word of advice of our Hadrat (Masīhul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Khān Sāhib *rahimahullāh*): 'Take admission in the *madrasah*, but do not interfere in *madrasah* affairs.' In other words, do not voice your opinions with regard to the administration of the *madrasah*. Do not ask why this is like this, and not like that, etc. Now that you have taken admission in the *madrasah*, humble yourself, obliterate yourself before your teachers, and become occupied in acquiring knowledge with patience. If you have to say anything, say it with absolute respect and dignity. Your teachers and administrators [of the *madrasah*] are your well-wishers. They love you with all their heart. If you say something to them in a soft way, they will certainly pay attention to you. When a son says something to his father, he certainly ponders over what his son says. If a student says something just as a worried child will speak to his father, the teacher will certainly give it some consideration.

The most harmful thing for a student

Nevertheless, Hadrat *rahimahullāh* said that you must take admission in the *madrasah* but do not interfere with *madrasah* affairs. He also said: "The most harmful thing for a student is to increase his

circle of friendship." He increases it to the extent of saying that he is my friend, and that is my friend, and so on. He will end up going to one room and then the next [and get occupied in futile discussions]. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* said that this is most harmful. If you want friendship, make it with your books, make it with your teachers, make it with your *shaykh*. Your books are your best friends. There are no better friends than books in this world. Mutanabbī was a famous poet during the ʿAbbāsī caliphate. He said something which I had quoted to you previously:

أعز مكان في الدنيا سَرْجُ سابحٍ – وخير جليس في الزمان كتابُ

"The most distinguished place to sit in this world is the saddle of a horse. And the best companion is a book."

When a person sits on a beautiful horse, he feels he is sitting in an honourable and distinguished place.

Make friendship with your books, and never with anything else. You may certainly greet your classmates, and enquire about their wellbeing. If any one of them is in a problem, you may help him. If he falls ill, you may visit him. If he needs something you may convey it to him. Apart from all this, you must devote your time to studying your books. Every single minute must be spent with your books. Your valuable time after *maghrib* and *ʿishā* must be spent in studying your books.

How to spend holidays

Your exams will end in two day's time and you will probably get a week's holiday. You must enquire about the righteous and pious personalities in your area, and go and spend some time with them. Pay particular attention to this, and make an earnest effort to carry it out. You must certainly spend some time with them. You will experience the excellent effects of this.

My dear brothers! People in the past used to undertake special journeys for this purpose. It has always been the practice of our pious elders. Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* personally went to meet Hadrat Maulānā Fadl ar-Rahmān Ganjmurādābādī *rahimahullāh* although he was a type of *majdhūb* (a person who is not in his proper senses all the time). There were times when he used to chase people away from him. He experienced strange conditions. Despite this, Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* went to spend time in his company. This shows how much of importance he gave to the company of the pious. We too must go to the pious elders and earn their blessings. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us *taufīq* (inspiration). Āmīn.

We saw our elders always giving due importance to this. Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib [Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī] *rahimahullāh* was a very distinguished scholar of the Islamic world. He was at the forefront of *ʿulamā'* of his time. The entire Islamic world revered him. But on countless occasions I saw him going to Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth [Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā] *rahimahullāh*. Maulānā ʿAlī

Miyā *rahimahullāh* went to stay in his company on one occasion and was busy performing *ishrāq salāh*. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth *rahimahullāh* had a set time-table for everything. Tea would be served at a particular time, something will be done at a particular time, and so on. When tea was served, Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth *rahimahullāh* asked: "Bhāi, where has ʿAlī Miyā gone to?" Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was in the practice of speaking swiftly. He asked: "Bhāi, where has ʿAlī Miyā gone to?" someone replied: "Hadrat, he is in the musjid." Hadrat said: "Go call him quickly." One person rushed out to call him, and Hadrat sent another person to call him. The second person ran out, and a third person followed suite. The moment Hadrat ʿAlī Miyā completed his salāh, he found 2-3 people waiting for him. On seeing this, he got up quickly and proceeded to Hadrat Shaykh without even wearing his sandals.

Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* said: "ʿAlī Miyā! Are you going to read your entire life's *qadā salāh* now?" Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* said this, but I did not see a single effect of ill-feeling on Hadrat ʿAlī Miyā's face. This, despite the fact that he was a very distinguished *ʿālim* and a powerful orator. He was not offended by this statement. He presented himself before the Shaykh without his sandals. We learn from such incidents that the high status which Allāh *taʿālā* bestows to these personalities is because He enables them to completely humble and obliterate themselves before the pious elders.

Obliterate yourself

My dear brothers! Knowledge is certainly necessary. You cannot proceed without knowledge. But knowledge alone is not sufficient. Together with knowledge, it is most essential to rectify and reform the heart. We must consider ourselves so small that we regard the entire creation to be better than us. We must think to ourselves that we have major shortcomings and faults within us. We must always consider ourselves to be in need and go to the *Ahlullāh*, sit in their company, and listen to their talks. You will hear things from them which you will never find in books. This is especially so with our *ʿulamā’* of Deoband. Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed them with many things. On countless occasions I saw Allāh *taʿālā* enabling them to say things which leave us astounded. Allāh *taʿālā* blessed them with very deep insight. By remaining for a few days in their company, a person perceives a change in his life.

My dear friends! My advice to you in this assembly is for you to strive for knowledge. You must comprehend your books thoroughly. But when you get holidays, you must go to the *Ahlullāh*, and spend time with them. And if you do not find any *Ahlullāh*, you must go to any pious and righteous Muslim in your musjid regarding whom your heart tells you that he is the most pious in your musjid. H̲ad̲rat Thānwī *rah̲imahullāh* has also written this. When your heart tells you that a certain person is the most pious in your musjid, you must go and sit in his company. Signs of piety are generally seen on a person’s face.

H̲ad̲rat Shāh S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh* went for a debate. Some Hindus looked at him and said: "This person appears to be a genuine Muslim, and a true exponent of Islam." Outsiders looked at his face and said this. It is an accepted fact that effulgence emanates from the faces of the *Ahlullāh*, and this is how they are recognized.

The special trait of knowledge

My dear friends! Many evils have crept into our *ʿulamā'* in today's times. The reason for this is that their hearts are not rectified. This is why we scorn others. Knowledge is something which elevates a person. I notice that when a person goes for forty days or four months, it has an effect in the manner of his speech, and he considers himself to be superior. Some people complain and say that this is how he is behaving and talking. Brothers! It is not his fault. He was on a certain level and has now gone to a higher level. It is a special trait of knowledge to elevate a person. This is why H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Ilyās S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh* also laid down a method of breaking this down. He said that it is essential to accompany knowledge with *dhikr*. As long as knowledge is not accompanied with *dhikr*, humility and *ikrām-e-Muslim* (honouring your fellow Muslim) will not develop in a person. Instead, he will become proud and haughty.

Study under the supervision of your teachers

My dear friends! I make a special request to you students to work very hard for the acquisition of knowledge. You must prepare from now in the light

of the work which you will have to do in this country. I make a special request to the students of *Mishkāt Sharīf* and *Daurah Hadīth* (the penultimate and final years of the *ʿālim* course) to inquire about the questions and objections which are being raised about Islam. What is the demand of your society? What doubts do they have about Islam? Consult your teachers on the books which are essential for you to study. Do all this so that you can go back and work in your communities.

My dear friends! I said this before, and I am saying it again. The nature of work is different in each place. The nature of work in India and Pakistan is completely different. The thinking of people over there is different. The work in Europe is different. You cannot adopt the modus operandi of India and Pakistan here [in Britain].

A *khatm-e-nubūwwat* (the finality of prophet-hood of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) conference was held here recently. I said to one of the organizers: "Maulānā, there is one thing which I do not understand. You are holding a *khatm-e-nubūwwat* conference in Wembley whereas all the participants in this conference will be those who believe in *khatm-e-nubūwwat*. They all believe that the finality of prophet-hood of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is absolute and certain. It is our firm belief that no Prophet is to come after Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* Whoever holds an opposing view will be out of the fold of Islam. Now are we going to deliver lectures before such people!?" I said: "The real need was for you to

go to those people who reject this belief or have doubts about it. You should have went to the universities or to the educated class. This type of people have such thoughts and doubts. It is their minds which have been corrupted.”

The need to be vigilant

I added: “Your opponents may appear to be doing nothing, but they are fully aware of everything. If a person has to resign in one of our well-known religious institutes and organizations, they will announce it on BBC London. From this you can gauge how observant they are about us. The smallest thing which occurs in our circles will be published by them in their newspapers, and shown via satellite. But we know nothing about how they run their organizations and where they send their articles to.

I went to a university and asked where the Islamic department was. A woman who was seated at a computer said: “Go to the fourth floor, and you will find Islamic books in aisle 62/63. I went and had a look. I was both shocked and saddened to find it filled with books written by Qādiyānīs.

My dear friends! We have to understand the nature of work which we will have to do for the sake of Islam in these universities, educational institutes, and among the educated class. For this, we will have to become experts in the language. You must have the power of proofs. You must have so much of patience and fortitude that when they pose provoking questions to you, you do not become

angry. They pose such questions wittingly to get you angry. They want you to become angry and say: "You are thick-headed, I cannot speak to you." This is not the correct way. The correct way is to listen to what they say with a cool head, and then respond.

The deep insight of our pious elders

Look at the deep insight which Allāh *taʿālā* blessed our pious elders with. I read about an incident yesterday. Two Egyptian *ʿālims* who did not have beards went to Hadrat Maulānā Binnaurī *rahimahullāh*. Maulānā took the two to a *jalsah* (a gathering). One of them was an excellent *qārī* and the other was an expert in the Arabic language. Allāh *taʿālā* had blessed Maulānā with sharpness of mind and foresight. He realized that people will find it odd that he has come with such people who have no beards. So Hadrat stood up and addressed the people saying: "These are very respectable guests who are from Egypt. They are excellent *qārīs* and masters of the Arabic language. *Māshā Allāh*, they have very good hearts. Now do not entertain evil thoughts about them in your hearts."

My dear brothers! There is a need for us to understand this. Understand the Qur'ān correctly. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us *taufīq* to practise on this. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this child, and reward his teacher and assistants. May Allāh *taʿālā* bless them in their lives. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable all Muslim children to learn the Qur'ān. Hadrat Hakīm al-Ummah Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said that if you cannot get a child to memorize the entire Qur'ān, get him to memorize certain portions

of it. H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Muftī Muh̲ammad Shafīʿ S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh* used to say: "Each one must secretly memorize some portion of the Qur'ān on a daily basis. He must not inform anyone that he is memorizing the Qur'ān. If he dies in this state, Allāh *taʿālā* will teach him the Qur'ān in his grave." May Allāh *taʿālā* give us *taufīq* to practise. Āmīn.

MAN'S REALITY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BELIEF IN THE HEREAFTER

Talk delivered in Musjid-e-Nūr, Leicester, on 2nd April 1997

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد، أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿فَلْيَنْظُرِ الإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ، خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ يَّخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ، إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

The importance of belief in the Hereafter

Respected elders and brothers! After pondering over the Qur'ān, one can conclude that there are two types of humans in this world. When people think that there is no life after this worldly life, and that this world is solely for eating and drinking and then comes to an end; then evil and turmoil spreads in the world. From a study of the Qur'ān and after reading the history of nations, we learn that whenever people felt that they only have to earn a living in this world, eat, drink, and enjoy until death, and that there is no life after death, then evil and turmoil spreads in the world. The Qur'ān says with regard to them:

إِنْ هِيَ إِلاَّ حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوْتُ وَنَحْيَى وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوْثِيْنَ

"There is nothing but our living in this world. We die and we live. We will not be raised again." (Sūrah al-Mu'minūn, 23: 37)

But when a belief contrary to the above pervades a society, and people believe that they have to face a long life after this short and temporary one, and that they will have to give an account to Allāh *taʿālā* for whatever they did in this world, then human society comes onto the path of rectitude.

It is established from the above that accountability after death is a fundamental belief. When this belief becomes weak, the concept of standing before Allāh *taʿālā* becomes weak. When this happens, then no matter how much education you impart and how much progress your country makes, human society will remain in pain and calamity.

Nawāz Sharīf's evaluation

You get a newspaper here by the name of *Jang*. When I picked it up this morning, it had an article on a speech delivered by the ex-prime minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Nawāz Sharīf, and which was broadcast on radio and television. He said: "It is almost fifty years since this country [Pakistan] got independence. It was established in the name of Islam, but looting and thieving has become the order of the day. The sole reason for this is that the concept of accountability in the Hereafter has disappeared from the hearts of the people."

Look at his words! Although he is not an *ʿālim* – he is a politician – yet the picture which he portrayed of his country is perfectly true and correct.

Last year, I read a book written by a senior Pakistani writer by the name of Shahāb S̲āh̲ib. He was the personal secretary of the president. After reading the scene which he portrayed of the eras of Ayyūb Khān and Yah̲yā Khān [two former presidents of Pakistan], I am even more convinced that no matter how many more universities and colleges are built, if the concept of accountability in the Hereafter is not found, the condition of countries will be the same as stated by Nawāz Sharīf S̲āh̲ib in his speech today. The looting and thieving is causing losses which run in millions of rupees. Can you imagine where the money is going to and why it is going? If it was firmly embedded in the hearts of people that they are accountable to Allāh *taʿālā* for whatever they do, this situation would never have prevailed.

Before the arrival of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, wars, fighting, looting, stealing, beating, etc. were prevalent throughout the world. At the time, the Persians and Romans had mighty empires. But people did not have any peace. H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā S̲āh̲ib [Abul H̲asan ʿAlī Nadwī] *rah̲imahullāh* wrote a book titled, *Mādhā khasaral ʿālam bi inh̲it̲āt̲ al-Muslimīn* (the loss which the world suffered by the retrogression of Muslims). In the beginning of this book, he presents a picture of the Roman Empire, the Persian Kingdom, and Hindu culture. He shows the opulent and lavish life which was led by the rulers while the subjects were dying of poverty. Just

as Nawāz Sharīf said: “There is no one to see to the wellbeing of widows and the poor, while the wealthy are earning loads of money and increasing their bank balances.” This is because we assume we are going to remain in this world. We read about the different problems in the world in the newspapers. We must think why this is happening. All are Muslims, all are reading the *kalimah*, and an entire country was separated in the name of Islam. Yet, this is the situation in that country. They use and fire their guns in the *masājid*. So many communal riots take place in India, but you do not hear of Hindus going into the *masājid* and killing Muslims. But in Pakistan, Muslims kill Muslims. This is because they do not fear the Hereafter, and they have not recognized their true worth.

Man’s true worth

Allāh *taʿālā* says:

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ

“Now let man observe out of what he has been created.” (Sūrah aṯ-Ṯāriq, 86: 5)

In this verse, Allāh *taʿālā* explains to man his true worth. The imām had read this verse just now in the s̱alāh. I thought to myself: look at how Allāh *taʿālā* explains man’s true worth. The Qur’ān says:

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الإِنْسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ

"Now let man observe out of what he has been created." (Sūrah aṯ-Ṯāriq, 86: 5)

Allāh *taʿālā* clearly states thereafter:

خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّآءٍ دَافِقٍ، يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ

"He has been created from gushing forth fluid. Which issues from between the loins and the chest." (Sūrah aṯ-Ṯāriq, 86: 6-7)

In other words, he has been created from a fluid which gushes forth from the loins of the male and the chest of the female. Allāh *taʿālā* created you by causing these two fluids to join. You were an impure drop before your creation. If that drop [of semen] did not go into the mother's womb, and were to fall onto a garment, the garment would have to be washed. This is how impure it is. Now you have been created from it. But you think you are very great, you have a lot of wealth, you have many vehicles which you drive around, and there is no one to question you. But Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ

"Surely He has the power to bring him back." (Sūrah aṯ-Ṯāriq, 86: 8)

In other words, the Allāh who created you from that drop has the power to bring you back to life. You

must realize that after you become mixed with the soil [after your death], Allāh *taʿālā* will bring you back to life.

Nevertheless, these verses explain to man his true worth. He was nothing before his birth. But it is through My power that you came into existence in this world, became so strong and were given so much of intelligence that you made aeroplanes with which you fly in the air, and travel in the land. But there will certainly come a time when you will return to the soil. This is why we read this verse at the time of burying a person:

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيْهَا نُعِيْدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى

"We created you from it [soil], We are returning you to it, and We will take you out of it once more."

But when this concept [of life after death] disappears from a nation, no type of education can influence it. The greatest degrees [and certificates] are useless in the absence of this concept. The senior officers who occupy top positions and those who are amassing millions in their bank accounts are not ignorant people. They are educated people. Yet they are sucking the nation. This is because their concept about the Hereafter is weak.

Hadrat 'Umar's *radiyallāhu 'anhu* concern for the Hereafter

A person loses his sleep when he thinks about the Hereafter. Concern for the Hereafter was very strong in Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* and this is why

he could not get sleep. He would rarely sleep an entire night ever since he became the caliph. He would patrol the alleys of Madīnah at night and look for people who were restless out of hunger.

One night he came across a woman who had lit a fire, over which she placed a cauldron. Her little children were crying near her. H̲ad̲rat ʽUmar *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu* asked her what the problem was, and why the children were crying? She replied: "We do not have anything to eat, and these children are hungry. I placed the cauldron on the fire to calm them in the hope that they will fall asleep."

Tears flowed from H̲ad̲rat ʽUmar's *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu* eyes and he addressed himself saying: "O ʽUmar! You are the caliph of the Muslims, while a poor woman is spending the night with her hungry children, and you do not even know about it?!"

He proceeded to the Bayt al-Māl (Islamic treasury), opened the door, took out some flour, ghee, salt, honey, and other items; and placed them on his head. His servant said to him: "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! Let me carry it." He replied: "Allāh *taʿālā* will question me tomorrow and ask me: 'O ʽUmar! You were the caliph of the Muslims, a woman and her children were suffering the pangs of hunger, and you did not see to them!?' What reply will I give to Allāh?"

When the concept of having to return to Allāh *taʿālā* is prevalent, then this is how the caliph of the Muslims goes about patrolling at night. But when

the concept of accountability to Allāh *taʿālā* is not present, the leader will continue filling his pockets with money without bothering about what is lawful and what is not.

A lack of fear for Allāh *taʿālā* in Muslim society

After reading this speech [of Nawāz Sharīf], I spent the entire day thinking about where Muslim society is heading towards, and why this concept of accountability to Allāh *taʿālā* is not strong? Whereas the Qur'ān repeatedly directs our attention towards this. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى، فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى

"Whoever feared standing before his Sustainer and stopped his soul from desires, then Paradise alone is his abode." (Sūrah an-Nāziʿāt, 79: 40-41)

It is essential to stop one's self from desires of the soul. If you desire good food, a good vehicle, a nice house, and good clothes, then acquire all these in the lawful manner. If you acquire them through unlawful ways, you will be accountable to Allāh *taʿālā*. And when you stand before Him, neither will a false answer help you, nor will any person's intercession work. Man's tongue will be sealed, and his body parts will speak. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَلْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَى أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيْهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ

"This day shall We set a seal on their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall

bear witness to whatever they used to earn." (Sūrah Yā Sīn, 36: 65)

Previously, when *ʿulamā'* used to quote such verses, youngsters could not understand how these hands and feet will speak. But when the tape recorder was invented, they understood, and did not have any objections. On the day of Resurrection, Allāh *taʿālā* will give these body parts the power of speech. If a person held something unlawful, his fingers will testify. If he looked at something unlawful, his eyes will testify. If he listened to something unlawful, his ears will testify.

My dear friends! It is most essential for Muslims to develop this thought and concept, viz. we have to go to Allāh *taʿālā*, and we will have to give an account of every small and big deed to Him. If a person develops this quality, he will not wander and stray. This is the reason for the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* laying so much of stress on belief in Allāh *taʿālā* and belief in the Hereafter.

Belief in Allāh and the Hereafter is the main key

We come across so many Ah̲ādīth of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* wherein he said: "The one who believes in Allāh and the Last Day must…" We learn from this that belief in Allāh and the Last Day is the main and essential key. When this belief settles down firmly in a person's heart that Allāh *taʿālā* is one, He is my Creator and Master, He created me, He will bring me back to life, I will have to account before Him – then even if a small child comes to his shop, he will not cheat him in any way.

He will not take four pounds from him in return for an item which sells for just one pound. This is because he is conscious of having to present himself before Allāh *taʿālā* and give an account to Him. If he is not conscious of this, then he will behave as our city people deal with villagers when the latter come to their shops.

I went to a place three days ago and inquired about the price of a certain item. The person said that it was 140 rupees. I moved aside, and told my nephew, S̲ādiq, who was with me to go and make a price with the shopkeeper. He went and offered 60 rupees. The shopkeeper agreed to sell it for 70 rupees. Now what can you say about him? He first says that the price is 140 rupees, and is then prepared to give it for 70 rupees.

Acts of faithlessness are common in our society. This is because consciousness of the Hereafter is not present. The Qur'ān wants to create this consciousness. The Qur'ān says that we must not consider this world to be the only existence, we will be free thereafter, and there will be no one to question us. Rather, there is going to be an eternal life after the present life. The actual "customs" will be there. If we go through the "customs", we will enjoy an eternal life of success. When this concept is firmly embedded in our hearts and we live our life in this world accordingly, we will neither devour any person's wealth, speak lies, nor look at anything unlawful. When this happens, we will have a model society.

Allāh *taʿālā* says in the Qur'ān:

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُوْرُ

"He knows the treachery of the eyes and what the hearts conceal."

If this belief is firmly embedded in man, especially in Muslims, everyone will enjoy a life of peace and comfort. The situation during the era of Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was such that a woman could travel from Sanʿā' to Hadramaut without anyone interfering with her.

The dangerous situation in America

Today the situation in America is such that a woman in Chicago will not have the courage to walk outside with her purse in her hand. If you park your car outside in New York, it will have disappeared the next morning. This is the situation in New York. This is because the concept of the Hereafter has left the minds of people. There is an abundance of wealth, and there are many universities. We were passing by Berkeley University, so I asked my companions: "How many students are there in this university?" They replied: "Thirty six thousand." I was astounded when I saw their multiple-story library. I sat and thought to myself that although there are so many massive libraries, the condition of the society is such that a person cannot walk after sunset and reach his house. All this is because the teachings of the Qur'ān have been abandoned.

The fundamental reason for our suffering

Our very own society is suffering. We have the Qur'ān in our hands, and we have the example of Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam and the S̲ah̲ābah rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum before us; yet we are suffering so much. The sole reason for this is our abandoning these teachings. If we were to live a life where we help each other, see to each other, worry about the wellness of each other, our society will become a treasure-house and a granary of peace and safety.

We must be fully prepared to bear pain and discomfort, while conveying comfort to our fellow brother. He must go ahead even if we are left behind. Unfortunately, our attitude is that we must have everything even if it means the entire world drowning in the process, or going to the Hell-fire. On the other hand, Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* taught the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* to bear difficulties for the comfort of their fellow brothers. This is the difference between a religious mind and an irreligious mind.

The way to peace and safety in this world

My dear friends! Even today there is only one way to peace and safety in this world. There is no other way. If the people of the world have conviction in the manner in which Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* trained the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum*, the concept of the Hereafter which he established, and the belief of life after death which he embedded in their hearts; peace and safety will be established

throughout the world. Special attention must be given to firmly embedding the belief of life after death, and accountability to Allāh *taʿālā* for every single thing.

Allāh *taʿālā* has the power of bringing us back to life even if people burn their bodies and scatter their ash in the ocean, as is the custom among Hindus. Senior leaders make bequests that when they die, their bodies must be burnt and their ash must be scattered throughout India in the different farms and rivers. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru had made a bequest that when he dies, his ash must be scattered throughout the rivers and farms of India. This will not affect Allāh's power in any way. He will merely issue an order and all the tiny bits will be gathered. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّهُ عَلَى رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ

"Surely He has the power to bring him back." (Sūrah aṯ-Ṯāriq, 86: 8)

Our heedlessness

Because we do not even have the enthusiasm to understand the Qur'ān, we will perform our s̲alāh behind the imām and depart. We do not know what Allāh's *taʿālā* instructions were in the verses which were read by the imām. The extent of our heedlessness can be gauged from the fact that we are prepared to study everything about the world, but we pay no attention to the Qur'ān.

My dear friends! Learn the Qur'ān; it will steer and guide us. It will set right our life. This is the only Book which guarantees our success in the Hereafter. When we read and understand this Book thoroughly, we will experience a lot of peace. My dear brothers! Those servants of Allāh *taʿālā* who understood the Qur'ān and moulded their lives according to it do not experience any stress. I have witnessed that stress and worries afflict those who abandon the Qur'ān and live a life which was existent among the unbelievers before the advent of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

It is a *kufr* mindset to hanker after the world and cause harm to others in the process. The Muslim mindset is to earn in a lawful way, I must not obtain money in any unlawful manner, and I must not cause harm to anyone. If this becomes the mindset of everyone, our entire society can become one of peace and security. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to understand the Qur'ān, and may He make firm our belief about the Hereafter. Āmīn.

My dear friends! If this becomes firmly embedded in our hearts, we will lead a correct life, our s̲alāh will be correct, our fasts will be correct, and our h̲ajj will be correct.

What is happening today?

Today people go for h̲ajj – which is a pure worship – with the intention of earning a lot of money. Before they can leave, they will plan and decide on bringing a certain amount of gold. Just about two weeks ago, about 80-90 innocent children were sent to Mumbai

from Saudi Arabia. After investigating the matter, it was learnt that when some people go for ʿumrah, they take these children with them and send them out to beg because people there are generally generous to beggars. These people will give a small amount of the money to these children, and keep the balance for themselves. Now look, all this is happening in that holy land where a person goes to cleanse and purify himself from sins. The court of Allāh *taʿālā* is very huge. If the person really wants to beg, all he has to do is hold the cover of the Kaʿbah and beg to Allāh *taʿālā*.

These are some of the unlawful activities our Muslims are engaged in. Muslim women conceal hashish in their belts and take it there. Several women were apprehended for this. We are most saddened by this. People are going to the holy lands, they are going to the House of Allāh, yet this is what they are doing. Whereas these are places where *duʿās* are accepted, where *duʿās* are not rejected. Yet we commit such crimes. How weak our *īmān* is that we even engage in these activities in such a holy place!?

Film lyrics in front of the Rauḏah Aqdas

In a shop in an alley in front of the Musjid-e-Nabawī, I saw a board stating: "Cassettes of the best Indian and Pakistani film lyrics available here". I trembled with fear and thought to myself: "The Rauḏah-e-Aqdas (blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*) is right before us, and film lyrics are being advertised here!?"

This is the level of our *īmān*, and then we complain that Muslims are suffering everywhere. My dear brothers! The *īmān* of Muslims has become weak. We have to fear Allāh *taʿālā* and constantly safeguard ourselves from His displeasure. Allāh's *taʿālā* grasp is very severe:

إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيْدٌ

"Surely the grasp of your Rabb is severe."

When Allāh *taʿālā* wills to destroy nations, He wipes them out in minutes. But we have no conviction in this. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us *taufīq* (inspiration).

Final advice

Set aside some time [from your schedules] and try to understand the Qur'ān under the guidance of an *ʿālim*. Try to understand what Allāh *taʿālā* is telling us. Think to yourself that you are going to depart from this world, you have to go to Allāh *taʿālā*, and you have to give an account for every single thing. Make it a habit to sit down everyday and think about this. *Inshā Allāh*, many good things will come into our lives. Different verses of the Qur'ān explain this in various ways.

The above verses were recited by the imām in the s̱alāh, so the thought came to me to speak a few sentences about them. May Allāh *taʿālā* give all of us the *taufīq* to practise.

أَللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَّبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ.

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِيْنَ.

رَبَّنَا لاَ تُزِغْ قُلُوْبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ.

أَللَّهُمَّ إِنَّ قُلُوْبَنَا وَنَوَاصِيَنَا وَجَوَارِحَنَا بِيَدِكَ، لَمْ تُمَلِّكْنَا مِنْهَا شَيْئًا، فَإِذَا فَعَلْتَ ذَلِكَ بِنَا فَكُنْ أَنْتَ وَلِيَّنَا وَاهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ السَّبِيْلِ، وَاهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ السَّبِيْلِ، وَاهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ السَّبِيْلِ.

أَللَّهُمَّ وَفِّقْنَا لِمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضَى وَاجْعَلْ آخِرَتَنَا خَيْرًا مِّنَ الأُوْلَى.

أَللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَّاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ إِمَامًا.

أَللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَّفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَّقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ.

أَللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا لاَ تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَّسِيْنَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا، رَبَّنَا وَلاَ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا.

رَبَّنَا وَلاَ تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لاَ طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ، وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا، أَنْتَ مَوْلاَنَا فَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِيْنَ.

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ، وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ.

وَصَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَى خَيْرِ خَلْقِهِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَأَتْبَاعِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ، يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِيْنَ.

THE FIRST LESSON OF BUKHĀRĪ SHARĪF

Lesson delivered in Jāmi'ah Riyād al-'Ulūm, Leicester, on the occasion of the opening lesson of Bukhārī Sharīf – 31 December 2002

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وإمام المعلمين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه وعلماء أمته أجمعين.

أما بعد! إِنَّ أَصْدَقَ الْحَدِيْثِ كِتَابُ اللهِ، وَأَحْسَنَ الْهَدْيِ هَدْيُ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

We are merely quoting what we learnt

Dear elders and friends! It is out of his love and sincerity that whenever I have the occasion to come to this country, Hadrat Maulānā Salīm Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* invites me to this religious institute and gives me an opportunity to meet the guests of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. I am merely a student. We are not on the rank of those who are known as *'ulamā'*. They have passed on. They are the likes of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Sāhib Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh*, Shaykh al-Hind Hadrat Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and others. Hājī Fārūq Sāhib *rahimahullāh* [of Sukkhur, Pakistan] who used to

come here in the last few years used to quote this poem in his talks: "I am merely quoting the words of my *murshid* and my *shaykh*. A monkey imitates whatever man does."

We are merely quoting and imitating. We heard some things from our teachers, read certain things in books, and are now presenting some of what we remember.

Man's salvation lies in holding on to Mu<u>h</u>ammad *<u>s</u>allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*

At present, the entire humanity is on the path to destruction. You and I – all of us – have to have full conviction that the salvation of humanity lies in following the way shown by Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. No matter where we go and where we live, it becomes our obligatory responsibility to attach ourselves to his teachings, and to places where his teachings are taught. Our good fortune lies in this. But if we do not attach ourselves to such institutions and do not take a part in their progress, it will be a serious shortcoming on our part.

As per the statement of <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib [Abul <u>H</u>asan 'Alī Nadwī] *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*, the *'ulamā'* are like salt. When salt is missing in food, it is tasteless. In like manner, in the absence of *'ulamā'*, the life of the *ummah* will become tasteless. It is the essential duty of the *'ulamā'* to carry out their obligations. They must be conscious of conditions and situations.

I experience much happiness when I come here. I met Hadrat Maulānā previously, and Allāh *taʿālā* placed love for him in my heart. Placing love in a person's heart for certain people is from Allāh *taʿālā*. We constantly make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* to bestow Maulānā with good health and well-being. Allāh *taʿālā* must enable him to serve *Dīn* in this country. We are witnessing with our own eyes how – through his blessings – he has conveyed this *madrasah* from the primary years of study to the final year of *Bukhārī Sharīf*. All this is through Allāh's grace.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ

"It is by the grace of Allāh. He bestows it to whomever He wills."

What a great opportunity provided to us by Allāh *taʿālā*! It never crossed my mind, in fact, it never crossed my heart that I will be coming to Leicester on this trip. But it was out of sheer coincidence that Maulānā came to Bolton the day before yesterday, and insisted I come to Leicester because it is on the way. I replied: "Very well, it will afford me an opportunity to meet *ʿulamā'* and students."

We are not worthy of this

I did not even think for a moment that I will have to commence *Bukhārī Sharīf* and conduct the lesson. But when Hadrat Maulānā requested me, I considered it my good fortune and presented myself in the hope of participating in this blessed assembly. I am not worthy of conducting a lesson of *Bukhārī*

Sharīf. I clearly remember the scene when – after the demise of Hadrat Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* – Hadrat Maulānā Yūsuf Sāhib Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* was persistently invited to take his place in Dhābel and teach *Bukhārī Sharīf*. Hadrat Maulānā Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* refused repeatedly, but when the people insisted, he accepted. We were very young at the time. I was in the third year. I can clearly visualize how Hadrat Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* entered the class and did not sit at the spot where Hadrat Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* used to sit. Instead, he sat nearby, and began crying profusely. He then said: "Binnaurī does not have the courage to sit in the place of ʿAllāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* and teach *Bukhārī Sharīf*." Maulānā cried again for a long time, and then said: "It is a sign of *qiyāmat* (Resurrection) when people like us teach *Bukhārī Sharīf*." When an erudite *ʿālim* like Hadrat Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* is saying this, what can be said of people like us? We are nothing in comparison to them. Nevertheless, this is a very important and blessed book of Hadīth. So we presented ourselves here for the blessings. May Allāh *taʿālā* fill our coming here with blessings.

Divine revelation is the basis of *Dīn*

The Hadīth which Maulānā read is from the chapter on how revelation started coming to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In the introduction to this book, you must have heard many things from Maulānā with regard to the memory of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* and his piety. The arrangement of this book is also unique. You will

realize its distinguished position in this regard when you compare it to other books. Imām Bukhārī's mind goes to things which are not imagined by others.

Look! He commences with how revelation started coming to Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Some compilers commenced their books with the book on purity, others with the book on *īmān*. But Imām Bukhārī *rah̲imahullāh* starts it with how revelation started coming to Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

The *ʿulamā'* pondered over this and noted in their commentaries that divine revelation is the basis and foundation of *Dīn*. Once we understand the position of divine revelation, we will automatically understand the position of prophet-hood, and then the importance of the Qur'ān. Man must first understand what divine revelation is, he must accept it, and he must affirm that it is from Allāh *taʿālā*. Imām Bukhārī *rah̲imahullāh* wants to explain the entire *Dīn* through H̲adīth, this is why he commences with the chapter on how revelation started coming to Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. In this way, he is making reference to the fact that once you understand the essence of divine revelation, you will understand the essence of *Dīn*.

Those who reject divine revelation do not believe in prophet-hood. For example, the Arab idol-worshippers used to say: "How can a man who eats food be a Prophet!?"

مَا لِهَذَا الرَّسُوْلُ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِيْ فِي الأَسْوَاقِ

"What is it with this Messenger, he eats food and walks about in the market places."

But Hadrat Abū Bakr *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* understood it immediately. Even on the occasion of *Miʿrāj* (Ascension), he immediately accepted whatever Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said and reached the rank of *siddīqīyyat* because of it. As for those who rejected divine revelation, they remained in ignorance. This is why Abū Jahal fell from the lofty position which he had [in Makkan society]. This shows that the fundamental basis and foundation is divine revelation. This is why Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* commenced his book with the chapter on how revelation started coming to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.*

The meaning of *wahī*

The linguistic meaning of *wahī* is "a subtle reference". This is the meaning you will get if you check *Lisān al-ʿArab* and other books, i.e. to make reference to something in a subtle way. I studied *Bukhārī Sharīf* under Maulānā ʿAbd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib *rahimahullāh.* When he used to invigilate during the final examinations, some students would stop writing and look here and there. Hadrat would say to these students: "It seems as though you are waiting for *wahī.*" So in this context, it meant that the student was waiting for some reference [from one of his fellow students]. They will make some signs, this person will catch up, and continue writing. [Later

on, when I was invigilating] I saw a student writing something on a piece of paper and throwing it to another student. I went to him and took the paper from him. When I opened the piece of paper, I noticed that he had written in Gujarati: "What is the meaning of this?" He did not understand a certain Arabic word so he was asking his friend.

So *wah̲ī* means "a subtle reference". This word also means *ilhām* (inspiration) and *kitābat* (writing). Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rah̲imahullāh* provides several meanings of *wah̲ī* in the third volume of *Sīratun Nabī*. He quotes some lines of poetry as well to demonstrate the different meanings of this word. You must check *Sīratun Nabī*. ʿAllāmah Shiblī [Nuʿmānī] *rah̲imahullāh* wrote *Sīratun Nabī*, but the third volume onwards is written by Sayyid [Sulaymān Nadwī] S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh*. So he provides several different meanings and quotes different poets to show how they used the word *wah̲ī* in different contexts.

You are *h̲uffāz̲* (memorized the Qur'ān) and you know that the word *wah̲ī* is used in different meanings in the Qur'ān. For example, Imām Bukhārī *rah̲imahullāh* quotes this verse:

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوْحٍ

"We sent revelation to you just as We sent revelation to Nūh̲."

In the above verse, the word *wah̲ī* is used in the same Sharʿī meaning, i.e. Allāh *taʿālā* sends down

His message through a messenger to a chosen servant of His. This is the Sharʿī meaning of the word. The linguistic meaning is just "a subtle reference" while its meaning in the Sharīʿah is different. So here, it means that Allāh *taʿālā* sent revelation through Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* to Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as He sent to the past Messengers.

The word *wah̲ī* is also used to mean *ilhām* in some places in the Qur'ān. For example:

أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى أُمِّ مُوْسَى

The author of *Jalālayn* writes next to the word *awh̲aynā, alhamnā*. You may refer to *Jalālayn Sharīf*. So we learn from here that the previous meaning of *wah̲ī* – i.e. an angel bringing a message from Allāh *taʿālā* to a Messenger – does not apply here.

Elsewhere, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَأَوْحَى رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ

"Your Rabb ordered the bee."

Here it refers to "natural guidance".

Elsewhere, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

يُوْحِيْ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُوْرًا

"who teach each other embellished words by way of delusion." (Sūrah al-Anʿām, 6: 112)

In other words, Satan makes gestures to some of his friends, and convinces them through embellished words. So another meaning of *wahī* is gauged from the above.

Nevertheless, this is something to look into. The Qur'ān uses certain words in different places and they have different meanings in different contexts. If you study *al-Mufradāt* of Imām Rāghib *rahimahullāh*, you will see how just one word of the Qur'ān is used in different meanings. For example, you will see the word *fitnah* used in several places in the Qur'ān having different meanings. The same can be said of the words *ummah, hamīm*, etc. I asked a student: "What is the meaning of *hamīm*?" He replied: "Hot water. Example, you say: *ightasalnā bi mā'in hamīmin* – we had a bath with hot water." I asked him: "How will you translate the following:

لاَ يُسْئَلُ حَمِيْمٌ حَمِيْمًا

When I asked him this, he remained silent and looked at me because he did not think that the word *hamīm* also means "a bosom friend". A close or bosom friend has the heat of love for his friend. Based on this similarity, he is called *hamīm*. [the translation of the above verse is]:

"No friend will ask about his friend." (Sūrah al-Maʿārij, 70: 10)

Different forms of divine revelation

So I was saying that *wahī* has several meanings, and we have to understand what it means in the present context. Then there are different forms of *wahī*, as you will read in the next Hadīth wherein it states that Jibraʾīl *ʿalayhis salām* would sometimes come to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in the form of a Sahābī, e.g. Dihyah Kalbī *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. The Hadīth uses the words *kāna yatamath-thalu* (he used to take the form of). This refers to angels taking the form of someone. Sometimes, *wahī* took the form of *salsalatur jaras* (the ringing of a bell). The following Hadīth states that sometimes it sounded like the ringing of a bell. When Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to receive *wahī*, he used to feel a heavy weight, his blessed face would change expression, and he would feel as if something weighty has been placed on him. So much so, this form of revelation would cause drops of perspiration to fall from his forehead even on an extremely cold winter's day.

The narration of Hadrat 'Ā'ishah Siddīqah *radiyallāhu ʿanhā* has the words:

إِنَّ جَبِيْنَهُ لَيَتَفَصَّدُ عَرَقًا

"Perspiration is flowing from his forehead, and dripping like pearls."

When Arabs hear this sentence, they go in a sort of trance because of its eloquence. This book of Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* is also very eloquent as regards its Arabic. We should not confine ourselves to speaking on a Hadīth and explaining a few rulings from it. We should also ponder over the literary angle of the Hadīth. I came across an Egyptian book titled *al-Balāghah an-Nabawīyyah* in which the author quotes several Ahādīth and shows the eloquence in them. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

أُوْتِيْتُ جَوَامِعُ الْكَلِمِ

"I have been given the ability to utter a few words which have a lot of meaning."

This is why we have to look deeply at each Hadīth. This is why in his book, *Mukhtārāt,* Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib [Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī] *rahimahullāh* first quotes a few sections from the Qur'ān and then follows them with some Ahādīth. One such narration is titled *Fī Banī Saʿd.* If any of you read *Mukhtārāt,* you must have read this narration. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* quoted such narrations to demonstrate the eloquence and sweetness contained in the words of Ahādīth. He writes with regard to these words:

إِنَّ جَبِيْنَهُ لَيَتَفَصَّدُ عَرَقًا

"Perspiration is flowing from his forehead, and dripping like pearls."

So the Arabs go in a sort of trance when they hear it.

Some Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* say that when revelation used to come down to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he would feel a heavy weight, and this feeling would go away after some time. There were times when Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was lying down with his head on a Sahābī's thigh, and when revelation came down, the Sahābī would feel as though his thigh would break. When revelation used to come down to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* while he was on a camel, the camel would sit down.

Sometimes revelation would be brought by Jibra'īl *ʿalayhis salām* while he was in his original form. He came like this to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* a few times. Both ends of the horizon would appear to be filled with his many wings, and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* would be awe-struck by this scene. So this is another form of *wahī*.

The initial stages of *wahī* commenced in the form of *ru'yā sādiqah* (true dreams). Dreams of the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* are never false. So *wahī* commenced with true dreams. Consequently, the dreams which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* saw initially were as clear as the break of dawn. So these are different forms of revelation as stated by ʿAllāmah Ibn Qayyim *rahimahullāh* in his book.

Nevertheless, the Arabs considered revelation to be something new. This is why Allāh *taʿālā* states that the revelation which is sent to Mu<u>h</u>ammad *<u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is not something new. It is the same as was sent to previous Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. For example, to <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Nū<u>h</u> *ʿalayhis salām* and others after him. The people of the Book [Jews and Christians] were aware of revelation coming to <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Ibrāhīm *ʿalayhis salām*, Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām*, and that Allāh *taʿālā* spoke to some Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. For example, Allāh *taʿālā* says:

كَلَّمَ اللهُ مُوْسَى تَكْلِيْمًا

"Allāh spoke to Mūsā verbally." (Sūrah an-Nisā', 4: 164)

Sometimes, Allāh *taʿālā* speaks from behind a veil (مِنْ وَّرَاءِ الْحِجَابِ). For example, He says:

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُّكَلِّمَهُ اللهُ إِلاَّ وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَّرَاءِ حِجَابٍ

"It is not in the power of any human that Allāh speaks to him except by signals, or behind a veil..." (Sūrah ash-Shūrā, 42: 51)

There are times when Allāh *taʿālā* speaks directly, for example when He spoke to Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* on the night of Miʿrāj:

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَى فَأَوْحَى إِلَى عَبْدِهِ مَا أَوْحَى

"He then drew closer and came suspended. He thus came within two bow-lengths or even closer. Allāh then revealed to His servant whatever He revealed." (Sūrah an-Najm, 53: 8-10)

In the above instance, Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* engaged in a private discussion.

The *ʿulamā'* state that the other Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* received revelation in just one form. As mentioned above, Allāh *taʿālā* spoke to Mūsā *ʿalayhis salām*. But revelation came to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in all the different forms. From behind a veil, Allāh spoke directly to him, an angel came in his original form, an angel came in the form of someone else, and also like the ringing of a bell.

Times have changed now and many advances have been made. When we were studying in Dhābel, we used to go to the post office. There was a small instrument placed one side and a tapping sound would be heard from it. When I enquired what it was, I was informed that the machine was receiving a telegram. Although we are standing there, we do not understand anything that is being received. But the post master understands it and records it. On seeing this, I understood the meaning of *salsalatul jaras* (the ringing of a bell).

My dear brothers! I recited a verse at the beginning:

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوْحٍ وَّالنَّبِيِّيْنَ

"We sent revelation to you as We sent revelation to Nūh and the Prophets."

Allāh *taʿālā* is saying in this verse that revelation is not something new which is being sent down to you [O Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] for the first time. It was also sent to Prophets of the past. Therefore, the objections which people are making against it are ungrounded.

Set right your intention

The second narration is what you studied in *Mishkāt Sharīf*:

إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

"Actions are based on intentions."

Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* started with the subject of revelation, quoted a verse, and immediately followed it with this narration to teach people – whether it is the author, the one studying this book, or the one teaching – that the first thing which they have to do is to set right their intention. This is why ʿAbd as-Salām ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd *rahimahullāh*, ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Mahdī *rahimahullāh* and others state:

هذه الرواية ثلث الإسلام

"This narration makes up one third of Islam."

In his book, *Maʿāriful Hadīth*, Maulānā Muhammad Manzūr Nuʿmānī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* has gone to great lengths in explaining this Hadīth. Students ought to refer to his explanation. Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Manzūr Nuʿmānī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* explained this Hadīth in simple words which every person – the ordinary man and the learned – can understand. It is really a remarkable feat [to write in manner which appeals to all types of people]. We must not think that we are studying *Bukhārī Sharīf* so we do not need to refer to *Maʿāriful Hadīth*.

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* states therein that when Hadrat ʿAbd ar-Rahmān ibn Mahdī *rahimahullāh* said that this Hadīth makes up one third of Islam he said it because Islam is made up of three things: (1) beliefs, (2) actions and deeds, (3) sincerity and devotion (*ikhlās*). Since the above Hadīth makes mention of *ikhlās*, it makes up one third of Islam. You know that when a deed is not accompanied with a good intention and sincerity, it cannot be accepted by Allāh *taʿālā*.

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* then quotes in *Maʿāriful Hadīth* the Qur'ānic verses which make reference to the importance of *ikhlās*. He writes that Allāh *taʿālā* gives an example of those who spend in His path for show. It is like soil which settles on a slippery stone, and when rain falls onto it, it washes off all the soil. This is the similitude of their spending. The Qur'ān explains this to us in a very eloquent way. As for those who spend in Allāh's *taʿālā* path with sincerity, their spending is like an

orchard which receives continuous rain and flourishes on account of it.

This shows that a good intention and sincerity result in blessings in an action, and Allāh *taʿālā* showers a lot of blessings because of *ikhlās*. This is why our pious elders say that when an action is initiated with *ikhlās*, Allāh *taʿālā* most certainly confers many blessings to it.

In his talks and lectures, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad ʿUmar Pālanpūrī *rahimahullāh* used to give excellent examples which could be easily understood. For example, a person builds a house and places windows in it with the sole intention of getting a good breeze from them. The breeze will enter his house, but he will not get any reward for it. But let's assume he says that he is placing windows so that he will hear the *adhān* and proceed immediately for salāh. This intention will not prevent the breeze from entering his house. It is not possible for only the sound of the *adhān* to enter his house and the breeze to not enter. But on the basis of this intention, he will get a reward for placing the windows. This is essentially the blessing of a good intention. Allāh *taʿālā* bestows many things because of a good intention.

This is why students must set right their intentions before commencing a book. They must first think for a while the reason why they are studying this book, and why they are studying these Ahādīth. Is it so that you can be considered to be a good *ʿālim* by the people? Is it so that you can be eligible for *imāmat*?

Is it so that you can become an excellent speaker? Or do we have some other intention? By bringing this narration, Imām Bukhārī *rahimahullāh* is advising us to set right our intention before we commence any good deed. This is why our pious elders say:

من أراد أن يصنف كتابا فليبدأ بهذا الحديث

"The person who intends writing a book must commence with this Hadīth."

He must do this so that his mind is directed to a good intention, he must ponder whether he is writing this book for fame, his name will become popular throughout the world, and he will be looked up to. This is why the first task is to set right one's intention.

My dear brothers! Our pious elders said something unique. In the beginning, a person's intention is pure but Satan disrupts it somewhere along the line. Man should therefore gauge his intention all the time. He must think to himself: Is the intention with which I commenced this task still present or not?

Sometimes we commence a task with a lot of sincerity, but then we begin receiving praises from people. They say: "*Māshā Allāh*, Maulānā is doing a lot of good work." This disrupts our intention. This is why our pious elders paid particular attention to it. A good intention means that a person commences a task with sincerity, and then strives to maintain it so that it is not disrupted in-between. In other words,

we have to assess and evaluate our intentions till the very end of our lives, and check whether they have been disrupted in any way. This is a very good point written by our elders. We learn a lot from reading their books. They show us our weak points, and highlight to us at which points Satan deceives us.

The background to the Hadīth, *"Actions are based on intentions"*

You must have heard many explanations on this Hadīth when you were studying *Mishkāt Sharīf*.

إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى

These are excellent and pure words. The background to this Hadīth is that a Sahābī well-known as Muhājir Umm Qays *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* emigrated to Madīnah Munawwarah to marry Umm Qays. So Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

إنما الأعمال بالنيات وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى، فمن كانت هجرته إلى الله ورسوله فهجرته إلى الله ورسوله، ومن كانت هجرته لدنيا يصيبها أو امرأة ينكحها، فهجرته إلى ما هاجر إليه.

"Actions are gauged by intentions. Each person shall receive [the reward for] what he intended. The person whose emigration was to Allāh and His Messenger [shall receive the reward for] his emigration to Allāh and His Messenger. The person whose emigration was to acquire of the world or to marry a woman, his emigration will be considered for whatever purpose he emigrated."

Some *ʿulamā’* state that the time of solitude which Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to spend in the cave of H̲irā’ was also a type of emigration. Imām Bukhārī *rah̲imahullāh* also makes reference to this fact that the desire for solitude was placed in Rasūlullāh's *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* heart. This is mentioned in a narration further on:

كان حبب إليه الخلاء وكان يتحنث بغار حراء يتحنث أي يتعبد

"The desire for solitude was placed in his heart. He would spend his time in worship in the cave of H̲irā'."

Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to leave his house and go to this cave. This was also a type of emigration. The *ʿulamā’* explain unique forms of relevance. What this means is that when man leaves everything for acquiring Allāh's *taʿālā* pleasure, it is an emigration.

You [students] have come here, you left behind your parents, your comfortable beds, and air-conditioned rooms; and are now living in the *madrasah* boarding rooms on ordinary beds. This is also a type of emigration. If you did all this for Allāh's *taʿālā* pleasure, you are receiving abundant rewards. Are you understanding? There is a great lesson in this for students. If you undertook this journey solely for Allāh's pleasure, left behind your parents and came here, then – *inshā Allāh* – your stay here and your bearing the hardships of this place will earn you a lot of rewards.

My dear brothers! It is a real achievement when a person is conscious of Allāh's pleasure at the time of doing every action. As far as I know, we are not experiencing many blessings in our times because the means – as desired by Allāh *taʿālā* - of earning them have decreased. Our intentions are not as they ought to be. I was going through a book last night on the life of H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā S̲āh̲ib [Abul H̲asan ʿAlī Nadwī] *rah̲imahullāh*. The introduction to this book is written by Shaykh Ah̲mad, a Syrian *ʿālim*. He makes mentions of an *ʿālim* in Syria.

The blessing of sincerity

He writes that there was an *ʿālim* by the name of Shaykh ʿAlī ad-Daqqāq in Damascus who used to conduct lessons in a small musjid. But his lessons became so accepted [by Allāh *taʿālā*] that people used to come in large numbers, and there remained no place in the musjid. People would carry straw mats, lay them on the road, and sit down there. Some of them could not even hear the shaykh's voice. They would look at him from a distance and their eyes would flow with tears. One day, one of his students went to him after the lesson and said: "Shaykh, an *ʿālim* said to me: 'We also conduct lessons of *tafsīr,* H̲adīth and *fiqh* in the *masājid*, but we do not get so many people attending our lessons. What is the reason for this?'"

The shaykh felt a bit embarrassed and remained silent. But when the student persisted, he said: "You have persisted, so I am going to relate something to you. I recite ten *pārās* of the Qur'ān daily before the *fajr s̲alāh* and I make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* saying: 'O

Allāh! Enable me to utter things which will be of benefit to the *ummah*.' I recite the ten *pārās* daily with the intention of Allāh *taʿālā* bestowing me with sincerity."

Look at the efforts made by our pious elders. I read this story yesterday and thought to myself: Look at how Allāh *taʿālā* blessed our *ʿulamā'*, those teaching in our *madāris*, and those sitting on straw mats in our *masājid*! Look at how enlightened their spirits were. This is not something small.

You people are so fortunate in the sense that Allāh *taʿālā* enabled you to join the *Bukhārī Sharīf* lessons this year. You must be grateful to Allāh *taʿālā* for this. Perform two *rakʿats* of salāh daily and make *duʿā* to Allāh *taʿālā* saying: "O Allāh! You chose us from millions of people and enabled us to study a great book like *Bukhārī Sharīf*."

My dear friends! This is a very great favour. Consider it to be a favour and value it. Ask of Allāh *taʿālā* daily with absolute sincerity. Study Hadīth in such a manner that it becomes a means to change your life. Look! The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* did not know anything. They were ignorant. But senior judges, rulers, *ʿulamā'*, and people conversant with the laws of inheritance were born from them. This was the blessings of the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*.

Our *madrasah* is linked to Suffah

A few lines of poetry were rendered at the beginning. One of the lines stated that this *madrasah* is linked

to Suffah. Who were the As-hāb-e-Suffah? They were the ones who handed themselves over to Musjid-e-Nabawī. They had no boarding, no kitchen, no food arrangements, and no tea arrangements. Some Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* would occasionally bring branches of dates and suspend them in Suffah, and these poor people would share them among themselves. Their occupation for the entire day was to listen to the Ahādīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. These were the As-hāb-e-Suffah. Suffah was our first *madrasah* and we are proceeding from there. *Al-hamdulillāh*, even today you will find the Qur'ān being recited their 24 hours a day. Whenever you look there, you will find people reciting Qur'ān. Our *madrasah* is linked to Suffah. We have to value it and see what type of people they were. They did not express their needs, they did not complain about anything. For example, they did not say we have no fans in our rooms.

The difficulties borne by Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*

Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* relates: "Sometimes we would be so hungry that we would fall unconscious. People assumed we were having epileptic fits." When a person has an epileptic fit, he falls unconscious at times. Saliva comes out of his mouth. Arabs used to treat this by placing their feet on the person's neck. So they used to do this with Hadrat Abū Hurayrah *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He continues: "I was not suffering from any illness. It was nothing but hunger."

Despite all this, they did not complain, they did not hand in any complaints. They did not go to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* with any application saying: "If this matter is not corrected, we will leave." They handed themselves over to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* for Allāh's sake. This is how we have to live in the *madāris*. The more hardships we bear, the more effulgent our knowledge will be.

I remember the statement of the *tablīghī amīr*, Hadratjī Maulānā Yūsuf Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He said: "The more difficulties a person bears for the sake of *Dīn* and knowledge, the more effulgence will develop in his knowledge. The more ease you become accustomed to, the lesser the effulgence in your knowledge. Just try and imagine the many hardships and difficulties borne by the Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum*.

The difficulties borne by Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*

You may have read about Hadrat ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* or your teachers must have related to you that when he heard about a certain person having a certain Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he would go to the person's house. If he came to know that the person was resting at the moment, he would not knock on his door. He would spread his sheet outside and lie down. The blowing winds would cause dust to settle on his face, and he would bear the intense heat. This was the consideration he showed to his teachers. He did not want to disturb their sleep. When the Sahābī

would open the door, he would say: “O cousin of Rasūlullāh! Why have you come here? Why are you lying down like this?” He would reply: “I have come to learn such and such Hadīth from you.” The Sahābī would say: “You should have summoned for me and I would have come to your house.” People knew he was from the Banū Hāshim, and related to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. But he would reply: “No. I cannot summon a person to teach me knowledge. Rather, I have to go out for knowledge.” What an excellent statement.

The humility of Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*

Although he was such a great personality and closely related to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, he would behave like a slave before Hadrat Zayd ibn Thābit *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*. He would hold the reins of the latter's camel and lead it while Hadrat Zayd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* was seated on the camel. The history books relate this as follows:

كان يقوم أمامه مثل العبد

“He used to stand before him like a slave.”

Hadrat Zayd *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* would feel ashamed and say: “Ibn ʿAbbās! What are you doing!?” He would reply: “We have been instructed to respect our elders in this way.” So Hadrat Zayd ibn Thābit *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* said to him: “Extend your hand.” When Hadrat Ibn ʿAbbās *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* extended his hand, Hadrat Zayd ibn Thābit *radiyallāhu ʿanhu*

kissed it and said: “We have been instructed to show our love for the family of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* in this manner.” These are things which we have to learn.

How should H̲adīth be studied

My dear friends! Do not read H̲adīth on the surface. Instead, we must apply it to our lives and see how our elders acquired H̲adīth. How they used to respect each other, and how they tried to practise on each and every word of the H̲adīth. This is what we have to learn. An Islamic society is built through H̲adīth. If you want to create an Islamic environment, you will have to practise on each and every word of the H̲adīth.

Now look! Each era has different situations and issues. While studying H̲adīth, you must ponder and think which H̲adīth will be most applicable for which time. You will have to correlate Ah̲ādīth. You must extract points from Ah̲ādīth in accordance with present situations, and explain these to the public.

An important book

I went to a bookshop and came across a book titled, *as-Sunnah Mas̲dar lilh̲ad̲ārah wa at-tashrīʿ*, written by Dr. Yūsuf Qard̲āwī. This book really appealed to me. He wrote excellent points on different aspects which can be inferred from the Ah̲ādīth of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. But we just pass through these Ah̲ādīth without delving into them.

The Ahādīth: solutions to problems of nations

You will be studying *Bukhārī Sharīf, Nasa'ī Sharīf, Abū Dā'ūd Sharīf*, and so on. You will come across many Ahādīth which contain solutions to present day issues. Do not merely read through them. Rather, ponder and reflect over them, and select them. Students put in a lot of effort in the Ahādīth which are at the beginning of the book, and do not pay much attention to those which come later on. They think they are merely about merits of actions, and therefore not so important. They must never think like this. Each and every Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is of great benefit. Each Hadīth has solutions to problems of nations. It is your and my conviction that the entire humanity's salvation lies solely in the way of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. A poet says: "If you follow any way different from the way of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, you will never reach your destination."

A person will not find the way without following the way of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. My dear friends! This is an absolute fact. We have to be fully convinced about it. We must live with this conviction, and invite others to it with the same conviction by saying: "If you want success, peace, love and tranquillity in the world, you must come onto the path of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. This is the only way." We must convince them with proofs.

Muslims are peace-loving; not terrorists

The famous Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is before you. Our Muftī Mahmūd Hasan Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh* would always give permission for this Hadīth:

الراحمون يرحمهم الرحمن، ارحموا من في الأرض يرحمكم من في السماء

"The Merciful [Allāh] loves those who show mercy. Show mercy to those on earth, and the One in the heavens will show mercy to you."

You must repeat this Hadīth constantly and say to people: "This is a Hadīth of our Prophet *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The one who is most merciful and affectionate shows mercy to those who have mercy." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* says in the above Hadīth: "Show mercy to all the creations on earth and Allāh will show mercy to you." The teaching which a Prophet gives to his followers cannot be wrong. I told the youth in Toronto to write these words in large and beautiful fonts, to have them translated into English, and to stick them on their cars. We constantly see banners stating: "Muslims are terrorists." So this will be a good reply to it. You are showing them the teaching of your Prophet *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. How, then, can those who received this teaching be terrorists!? Are you understanding what I am saying? These are the situations we are facing, so we must adopt the teachings of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* accordingly.

The people from whom I studied *Bukhārī Sharīf*

May Allāh *ta'ālā* bless you in your knowledge and enable you to practise on these things. I studied *Bukhārī Sharīf* in Dhābel under Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib Peshāwarī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd al-Jabbār Sāhib A'zamī *rahimahullāh*. The latter studied it under Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth [Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā] Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who studied it under Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib Sahāranpūrī *rahimahullāh*. The *sanad* (chain of transmission) of Hadrat Maulānā Khalīl Ahmad Sāhib *rahimahullāh* is well known.

Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib Peshāwarī *rahimahullāh* studied Hadīth under Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Husayn Ahmad Madanī *rahimahullāh* who studied under Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*, who studied under Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*, and the *sanad* of Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* is printed. You must have a look at it, it is the *silsilah* (chain of our elders).

Then when I went to Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband in 1959, I heard *Bukhārī Sharīf* in the classes of Hadrat Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* gave me a special *sanad* for this. Hadrat Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh* studied under Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. In this way, the *sanad* of Hadrat Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh* has the *silsilah* of both Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*.

I also obtained *ijāzah* (permission) from H̲ad̲rat ʿAllāmah Ibrāhīm S̲āh̲ib Balyāwī *rah̲imahullāh* who also studied under H̲ad̲rat Shaykh al-Hind *rah̲imahullāh*.

When Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh̲ Abū Ghuddah *rah̲imahullāh* came to Canada, I said to him: "I read the first and last narration to you in Johannesburg. I request you to give me *ijāzah* for your narrations." He had a booklet which he gave me, and he wrote on the margin: "I give you *ijāzah* for all my narrations." All the chains of transmission of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh̲ Abū Ghuddah *rah̲imahullāh* have been printed by his sons. The *sanads* of H̲adīth which were given to him by ʿAllāmah Zāhid al-Kautharī *rah̲imahullāh* and all other senior Arab *ʿulamā'* are contained in the printed book.

The essential thing is to follow the Sunnah

My dear friends! Obtaining permission from senior *ʿulamā'* is a source of blessings. May Allāh *taʿālā* maintain our affiliation with them. But the essential thing is our actions. We can receive the *sanads* of everyone, but if we do not have the treasure of following the Sunnah, then we have nothing. Actions are the basis. After studying H̲adīth, a person must be concerned about moulding his life in accordance with H̲adīth bearing in mind that Allāh *taʿālā* afforded him the opportunity of studying it. If a person does not change his life for the better after studying H̲adīth, it will be a serious deprivation. We see some students who have studied *Mishkāt Sharīf* and *Bukhārī Sharīf*, but you will find them cutting their hair according to western styles, they will

change their [Islamic] clothes for western clothes when they leave the *madrasah*. This is most astonishing. How can their minds accept these things which are in conflict with the Sharīʿah? We learnt the following poem in our student days: "The person who studies *Bukhārī* without love for Mu<u>h</u>ammad [*<u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*] gets *bukhār* (a fever), he does not learn *Bukhārī*."

Such a person's mind is filled with the "fever" of having studied *Bukhārī* but *Bukhārī* has no effect on his temperament. The effect can only be acquired after having true love for Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. You should therefore recite *durūd sharīf* (salutations) in abundance. You must make it a habit to read a certain number of *durūd* daily in the morning and evening. Give thanks to Allāh *taʿālā* for having afforded you the opportunity of studying <u>H</u>adīth. Make an endeavour to practise on the <u>H</u>adīth which you study. The A<u>h</u>ādīth with regard to eating, sleeping, waking up, sitting, walking, etc. are such that they can be practised on. A poet says: "It is through actions that one would either go to Paradise or the Hell-fire. Man by nature has been created from soil. His natural make up is neither of light [whereby he could certainly have went to Paradise] nor of fire [whereby he could certainly have gone to the Hell-fire]."

It is through actions that a person's life is made. If he does not have actions, he has nothing. The most striking feature of our elders and *ʿulamā'* of Deoband was that their practising on <u>H</u>adīth was to the peak.

Humility of our elders

Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* was an *ʿālim* of the highest calibre. Senior *ʿulamā'* were of the opinion that his juristic capabilities surpassed those of ʿAllāmah Shāmī *rahimahullāh*. But look at the extent of his humility. He was sitting in the courtyard and conducting his lessons when it started to rain. The students closed their books, picked them up and went indoors. In the meantime, Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* laid out his headscarf and began collecting the students' shoes and sandals on it. Look at how humble he was! Do you and I have such humility to carry the shoes of our fellow students?

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* conducted *Bukhārī Sharīf* lessons for forty years in Deoband. But he was so considerate of Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* [his *ustādh*] that when there were discussions with regard to the marriage of Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Tayyib Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, he said: "I will go to Rāmpūr with the marriage proposal for Maulānā Tayyib." Rāmpūr is a village near Sahāranpūr, and this is where Maulānā Tayyib was to get married. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* proceeded to Rāmpūr with the marriage proposal. On reaching there, he said: "I have come as the barber of the household of Hadrat Nānautwī."

This is a most remarkable thing to do. Imagine a person who was teaching *Bukhārī* for forty years, and who was considered to be the shaykh of the whole of India – and according to Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh*, the shaykh of the entire world. Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* said: "Do not limit his status

by referring to him as Shaykh al-Hind (the shaykh of India), he is Shaykh al-ʿĀlam (the shaykh of the world).” Now here is a personality who is on the level of being the shaykh of the world, yet he says: “I am the barber of the household of Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*.” He said this solely because Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh* was his *ustādh*.

My dear brothers! You must obliterate yourselves. You cannot get effulgence in your knowledge if you do not have humility. Obliterate yourselves before your teachers just as Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* obliterated himself before Hadrat Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*. This was the condition of all our pious elders. Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* went to the house of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* on one occasion, who had passed away by then. Many *ʿulamā’* were seated there. As he was entering, a little girl came out. She did not know he was Hadrat Madanī. She had a dirty bag and some money in her hand. She gave them to him and said: “My mother says you must go buy some meat.” Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* immediately took the bag and money and proceeded. On seeing this, the *ʿulamā’* stood up and said: “Hadrat! Where are you going?! We will bring it.” Hadrat replied: “It is an honour for me to go and bring meat for the household of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*.”

This was the condition of Hadrat Shaykh al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjam *rahimahullāh* who spent thirteen years in Musjid-e-Nabawī delivering lessons on Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. When he used to deliver his Hadīth lessons, he would point

towards the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and say:

قال صاحب هذا القبر

"The dweller of this grave said."

When he used to say this, the people would be overcome by a unique condition.

During my first visit to Madīnah Munawwarah, I went to the market to buy onions, potatoes, etc. I went to a shop which was slightly elevated. I was standing in the bottom, while the shop owner was seated two are three steps higher. I asked him in Arabic:

بكم هذا البصل؟

"How much are these onions?"

He looked at me. I was a young and newly-qualified boy at the time. He asked:

أين تعلمت اللغة العربية؟

"Where did you learn Arabic?"

I replied:

في جامعة دابيل وفي دار العلوم ديوبند

"In Dhābel university and in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband."

When he heard the name Deoband, he asked:

هل تعرف السيد حسين أحمد الهندي؟

“Do you know Sayyid H̲usayn Ah̲mad al-Hindī?”

I replied:

نعم، هو شيخي

“Yes, he is my shaykh.”

The moment he heard this, he came down immediately. I did not understand what caused him to rush so quickly. He then embraced me and began crying. He then related to me that he used to sit respectfully before the *shaykh* in Musjid-e-Nabawī.

Nevertheless, these were very senior people who taught H̲adīth in Musjid-e-Nabawī for thirteen years. He then taught H̲adīth in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband. Four thousand students qualified under him. Yet, he takes a dirty bag to the shops and brings meat, despite other *ʿulamā’* insisting they would do the task for him. This is the result of respect for knowledge. Although a person has become so senior, he considers himself to be a servant before his teacher. You must try to develop this quality.

How can the effects of H̲adīth become manifest on us?

My dear friends! The effects of H̲adīth have to manifest themselves on us. The effects of *Bukhārī Sharīf* can come after we have love for Rasūlullāh

sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. Without this love, we will get *bukhār* (fever), not *Bukhārī*. Someone has rightfully said that after studying *Bukhārī Sharīf*, we feel great, we think we are qualified, we think we have become *ʿālims*. But these things can only be acquired when we sit in the company of our elders and remain in their service. The companionship of pious elders is most essential. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to remain with them. Āmīn.

You must constantly read their biographies. Make it a point of not studying Hadīth without *wudū'*, read *durūd sharīf* in abundance, and study Hadīth with utmost respect and reverence. This is an opportunity afforded to you by Allāh *taʿālā*.

You must also ponder over the eloquence (*balāghah*) of Hadīth. There are many small eloquent sentences in Hadīth. Although Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* did not study literature under anyone, and did not study under any teacher, Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed him with knowledge directly from Himself. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to say:

علمني ربي فأحسن تعليمي، وأدبني ربي فأحسن تأديبي

"My Allāh taught me in the most excellent manner, and taught me manners and etiquette in the most excellent way."

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* also said:

أعطيت جوامع الكلم

“I have been given the ability to utter a few words which have a lot of meaning.”

Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* also said: “I was brought up among the Banū Saʿd and was made to drink milk by them.” This was a very eloquent Arab tribe. This is why the words and sentences uttered by Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* are the highest examples of eloquence. So when you study H̲adīth, ponder on the words. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us blessings in knowledge and in practice. May He enable us to live our lives in strict adherence to the Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and to sacrifice for it.

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد وبارك وسلم.

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد كما تحب وترضى، وعدد ما تحب وترضى.

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد كلما ذكره الذاكرون، وكلما غفل عن ذكره الغافلون.

اللهم لا أحصي ثناء عليك أنت كما أثنيت على نفسك.

اللهم لا إله إلا أنت، سبحانك إني كنت من الظالمين.

اللهم ربنا توفنا مسلمين وألحقنا بالشهداء والصالحين.

اللهم وفقنا لما تحب وترضى واجعل آخرتنا خيرا من الأولى.

اللهم ربنا زدنا علما نافعا. رب زدنا علما نافعا. رب زدنا علما نافعا.

اللهم إنا نسئلك العفو والعافية والمعافاة الدائمة في الدين والدنيا والآخرة، توفنا مسلمين وألحقنا بالشهداء والصالحين غير خزايا ولا مفتونين.

اللهم ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار.

اللهم وفقنا لما تحب وترضى واجعل آخرتنا خيرا من الأولى.

اللهم لا سهل إلا ما جعلته سهلا، وأنت تجعل الهم والحزن سهلا إذا شئت، يا أرحم الراحمين.

اللهم الطف بنا في تيسير كل عسير فإن تيسير كل عسير عليك يسير.

اللهم اهدنا فيمن هديت وعافنا فيمن عافيت، وتولنا فيمن توليت، وبارك لنا فيما أعطيت، وقنا شر ما قضيت، إنك تقضي ولا يُقضى عليك، إنه لا يذل من واليت، ولا يعز من عاديت. تباركت ربنا وتعاليت. نستغفرك ونتوب إليك. وصلى الله على النبي الكريم.

اللهم اغفر للمؤمنين والمؤمنات والمسلمين والمسلمات. اللهم ألف بين قلوبهم وأصلح ذات بينهم، وانصرهم على عدوك وعدوهم.

اللهم العن الكفرة الذين يصدون عن سبيلك، ويقاتلون أوليائك، ويكذبون رسلك. اللهم شتت شملهم، اللهم فرق جمعهم، اللهم دمر ديارهم، اللهم مزقهم كل ممزق.

اللهم خالف بين كلمتهم وزلزل أقدامهم. اللهم خالف بين كلمتهم وزلزل أقدامهم. اللهم خالف بين كلمتهم وزلزل أقدامهم.

اللهم إنا نجعلك في نحورهم ونعوذبك من شرورهم.

O Allāh! Forgive us our sins.

O Allāh! Through Your grace and favour, you enabled us to study Hadīth. O Allāh! Enable all of us to study with sincerity and to practise on it.

O Allāh! Accept this *madrasah* of ours. O Allāh! Accept all other *Dīnī* institutions. Create the means for their progress. Bless them with ease.

O Allāh! Enable us to complete the new programmes which we have in mind.

O Allāh! The treasures of the heavens and the earth are in Your control. You can open those treasures whenever You will. O Allāh! Open the treasures of Your mercy onto us.

O Allāh! Enable us to carry out the responsibilities of *Dīn* with ease.

O Allāh! Bestow us with sound understanding. Bestow us with sound understanding.

O Allāh! Make easy for us the difficulties in the path of knowledge.

O Allāh! Inspire us to do every task for Your pleasure. Provide us with the means for progress.

O Allāh! Conspiracies are being plotted against the *Dīnī* institutions of the world. O Allāh! Safeguard all the *madāris, masājid, khānqāhs* and assemblies of *dhikr* from their plotting and deception.

O Allāh! Revive the assemblies of *dhikr*.

O Allāh! Accept the efforts of those who are engaged in the work of writing and compiling books, and spreading Your *Dīn*.

O Allāh! Others who are serving Your *Dīn* in any other way – and it is approved by You – then accept it from them. O Allāh! Provide means for their progress.

O Allāh! Accept this institution of ours.

O Allāh! Shower it with Your special mercies.

O Allāh! You alone can show true mercy.

O Allāh! We are short sighted. Open our hearts and minds.

O Allāh! Instil correct things in our minds.

O Allāh! Inspire us to remain steadfast on what is correct.

O Allāh! Connect us to our pious elders. Make their teachings a source of guidance for us. O Allāh! Just as they left behind examples of pure lives for us, enable us to tread this path with simplicity and

humility. Enable us to devote our lives for the service of Your *Dīn*.

O Allāh! Do not allow us to make this knowledge a means to earn wealth.

O Allāh! Make this knowledge a means to acquire Your pleasure. Set right our intentions.

O Allāh! Bestow us with blessings.

اللهم ربنا توفنا مسلمين وألحقنا بالشهداء والصالحين. اللهم ربنا تقبل منا إنك أنت السميع العليم، وتب علينا إنك أنت التواب الرحيم.

وصلى الله على خير خلقه سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين، برحمتك يا أرحم الراحمين. والحمد لله رب العالمين.

AN IMPORTANT ADDRESS TO THE ‘ULAMĀ’

Talk delivered in Dār al-‘Ulūm London, Cant, on Thursday 7 April 2005

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين.

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِيْنَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ وَالَّذِيْنَ لاَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

Respected teachers and my beloved brothers! I am not well and I am not in a mood to deliver a talk. Nor do I know how to deliver talks. But when I sit with my beloved students, I say a few things as a way of mutual discussion.

Allāh *taʿālā* will provide the means for the protection of *Dīn*

At present there is much opposition to *Dīnī* institutions, and many false notions about the *madāris* are being propagated. Despite this, Allāh *taʿālā* is continuing to inspire us to open new *madāris*, students are taking admission in them, and student numbers are also increasing. This is Allāh’s *taʿālā* favour and we have to thank Him for it. Allāh *taʿālā* provides unseen means for the continued existence of His *Dīn*. Allāh *taʿālā* Himself promised Rasūlullāh s̲*allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*

that He will protect the Qur’ān which He revealed to him. He says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُوْنَ

“It is We who revealed the admonition [Qur’ān] and We are most certainly its protectors.”

Because Allāh *taʿālā* made this promise, He will create such people in whose hearts the idea of setting up a *madrasah* will come. Allāh *taʿālā* will place the thought in the hearts of some people to send their children for this purpose. Allāh *taʿālā* will continue providing means of this nature for the protection of His Book. This is why we have full conviction that irrespective of the opposition, these institutions are here to stay until the day of Resurrection – *inshā Allāh*. And this system of teaching and learning will continue.

We must value our position

Allāh *taʿālā* says that the knowledgeable and the ignorant can never be equal. Now that Allāh *taʿālā* favoured us by selecting us for the protection of His Book, it is our duty to be conscious of our position. It is a very great position which Allāh *taʿālā* conferred to us. The greater the position, the more a person has to mould himself accordingly.

If a person holds a senior position and then commits a shameless act, there is an uproar throughout the world. People will talk about his position and the shameless act which he committed.

Safeguarding Allāh’s Book and acquiring knowledge of its sciences are our essential responsibilities. This is why it is necessary for us to do two things: (1) We must acquire correct understanding of the sciences which Allāh *taʿālā* wills to give to mankind. Acquiring correct understanding is crucial. (2) After acquiring correct understanding, we have to put it into practice. One is for a person to have conviction. The other is to mould his life according to that conviction. These are the only two things which can make a person successful.

You must first comprehend a thing properly, have conviction in it in your heart, then apply it to your life and mould your life accordingly. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ

“Surely those who have īmān and did good deeds.”

First there must be *īmān* and firm belief, and this must be followed by good deeds. Look at the entire Qur’ān and you will see that wherever Allāh *taʿālā* promises Paradise, He mentions these two things. If a person has *īmān* and no good deeds, he will not be totally successful. If a person does good deeds but has no connection with Allāh *taʿālā*, does not believe in the Hereafter, then all those deeds will be worthless. These two things are prerequisites for man’s total success.

Why is there no firmness in our knowledge?

My dear friends! There is something which you and I have to reflect over. There are many *madāris* yet we do not see so much progress in our knowledge as there was in the time of our pious elders. Today knowledge has become superficial. Our children attend *madrasah* for a few years, they receive a certificate, and they now think they have become Maulānās, and they have received their certificates. They feel they have no need for teachers and books anymore. Deficient knowledge and deficient understanding cause much harm to a person.

Our elders used to exhaust and tire themselves for the sake of knowledge, and they used to work very hard for it. This is why there used to be depth and firmness in their knowledge. Our studying is superficial. We will pick up a book, read a bit, look at a few footnotes, leave out some, and keep the book aside. Our minds are attracted more to other things than to books. This is why we do not have the firmness in knowledge as possessed by our pious elders.

Focus is the first prerequisite for success

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā S̲āh̲ib [Abul H̲asan ʿAlī Nadwī] *rah̲imahullāh* visited us on one occasion, and we spoke to him about the syllabus. H̲ad̲rat Maulānā smiled and said: "Maulānā, leave the syllabus aside and teach. Whether you teach *an-nah̲w al-wād̲ih̲*, *hidāyatun nah̲w*, or any other book, it will not make any difference." He then said: "Sayyid Sulaymān Nadwī *rah̲imahullāh* used to say

that after many years of experience we have concluded that the essential thing is for the teacher and student to remain focused. If a teacher has the ability to teach a particular subject, then no matter which text book he has, he will be able to develop a child's capability. If the student is focused and studies a book with full concentration, he will certainly acquire that subject irrespective of whether you teach him *an-nahw al-wādih,ʿarabī kā muʿallim, hidāyatun nahw* or *kāfiyah*. No matter what, he will acquire that subject because he is attached to it."

This shows the prerequisite of a person turning his full attention to a subject. But we do not find this prerequisite in our *madāris* today. I went to a library in Toronto and saw some Urdu books there as well. One thing I experienced in Toronto is that the Europeans are very accommodating when it comes to knowledge. You will find libraries having several shelves of Gujarati books in areas which have a Gujarati population. They do this although they have no interaction with Gujarati. What is the need for people of Toronto to read Gujarati? But they realize that they have residents who are Gujarati speaking. Where there are Arab populations, you will find the libraries having Arabic books. I read an Arabic book on Ibn Khaldūn in one of those libraries. I did not come across this book anywhere in India.

A unique example of remaining focussed

As I was saying, I went into a library and came across a book, *Āb Hayāt*, written by Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Āzād *rahimahullāh*. This book

is out of print, I searched for it high and low in India but could not get my hands on it. This book contains biographies of past poets of India. When I saw this book in the library, I was overjoyed. I had been searching for it in India, and here I find it in Toronto. I borrowed it for one week.

The Maulānā relates some incidents of how much people of the past used to strive and endeavour. He relates the story of a poet who, due to certain circumstances, had to leave Delhi and go to Lucknow. From there he proceeded to Rāmpūr. The *nawāb* of Rāmpūr appreciated scholars, especially men of letters and poets. This is why scholars of philosophy, logic, poets and litterateurs had assembled in Rāmpūr. When the *nawāb* heard that this poet is a very senior poet and has come here because of some problems, he said to him: “You do not have to worry about anything. I will stipulate a stipend for you and make arrangements for your stay here.” He then gave him a beautiful house which was surrounded by an orchard which had many beautiful flowers. The flowers of London and Canada do not have the wonderful fragrance of the flowers in India. *Al-ḫamdulillāh*, even today you will find such flowers in India whose fragrance will completely perfume your heart and mind.

Nevertheless, when the poet entered his room, he had some of his old manuscripts which he had arranged in order and kept aside. Scholars will leave behind everything, but cannot leave behind their books. They keep their books attached to their chests because they spent their efforts on them.

Anyway, he had his manuscripts with him and continued arranging them. After several months, his companion said to him: “Hadrat! Why do you not open this window? There is such a beautiful garden behind it. I never saw you opening this window.” He replied: “Bhāi! Ever since I came here, I never turned my attention towards anything. I do not know where the garden is, and where anything else is. My gardens are these manuscripts which are with me. I am fully occupied with them by day and night.”

Maulānā Muhammad Husayn Āzād *rahimahullāh* writes: He was so engrossed that he did not open his window for six months. He did not even know there was a beautiful garden behind the window. Such was the condition of our people of the past. They had so much of desire for and attachment with knowledge that they would remain occupied with it all the time.

If a person wants to master a particular field, he will have to remain fully focussed to it, and remain attached to it. This is an accepted fact.

The secret behind the academic acumen of past scholars

Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* also said in that meeting [mentioned previously] that people of the past used to be very capable because they used to study each subject separately. For example, they would study all the books of *ʿilm as-sarf* (etymology) in the first two years. When they completed this, they would turn their attention to *ʿilm an-nahw* (grammar). This would be followed by

fiqh. Then if he came to know about a particular place having *'ulamā'* who specialize in the rational sciences, he would go there. Some would go to Rāmpūr, others would go to Taunk. In this way, several years would pass in studies. After all this, he would proceed to Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband or Mazāhir al-'Ulūm to study Hadīth. Most of them would come to Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*. Because they already possessed strong capabilities, the lecturers in the higher grades did not have to go into too many explanations.

Hadrat 'Allāmah Ibrāhīm Sāhib Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* was a very senior *'ālim* in Deoband. I was sitting in his company one day, when he said to me: "Maulwī Sāhib! Our Hadrat was not in the habit of lengthy explanations." He then asked me: "Do you know who I a mean when I say Hadrat?" I expressed my ignorance. He said: "When I say 'our Hadrat', I am referring to Shaykh al-Hind Maulānā Mahmūd al-Hasan Sāhib *rahimahullāh*." He then said: "The students used to read pages after pages and Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* would continue listening. This is because the students would come to class after having made full *mutāla'ah* (preparation) for the lesson. Some of the students were those who were teachers of Hadīth themselves, but they would attend Hadrat's lessons. Hadrat would stop at certain places, and say: 'Bhāi! Wait a bit. A certain objection can be raised in this Hadīth. It is against the Hanafī opinion. This is the reply to it. Okay, let us proceed now.' This is how the *Daurah Hadīth* used to be. They were not in the habit of lengthy explanations and discussions."

Our sorrowful condition

I went to Maulānā Qāḏī Sajjād Ḫusayn Ṣāḫib in Fataḫpūr Dillī on one occasion. He said to me: "Maulānā! What can we teach these students today? First we have to correct their *ʿibārat* (reading of the Arabic text), then we have to translate it for them, and then we give them a short explanation. We have to follow this with an explanation of the four *madh-habs*. A lot of time goes in all this." Qāḏī Ḫusayn Ṣāḫib has translated the *Mathnawī* of Maulānā Rūm *raḫimahullāh*. He added: "The reason for this is that their grounding is weak. There is no academic engrossment."

This is why it is necessary for us to devote ourselves entirely to the knowledge for which we have come here. Only then will we receive correct knowledge and acquire full benefit.

Nevertheless, people of the past used to acquire knowledge as described above. Many years would go into this, and it helped them to possess a firm and solid grounding. Our condition today is such that we do not remember the translation of the Qur'ān, but we consider ourselves to be qualified. Whereas each and every word of the Qur'ān is such that if we were to ponder over it, our minds would explode. The Qur'ān is a very eloquent speech. It is my and your firm belief that there is no book in this world which is more eloquent than the Qur'ān. But we are not understanding its eloquence and beauty. This is because we neither strive in the field of *balāghah* (eloquence) nor with the Arabic dictionaries.

The eloquence of the Qur’ān

Once, I was travelling on a steamship for h̲ajj. An *ʿālim* from Kerala [South India] was with us. I used to sit with him quite a bit. He said to me one day: “Maulānā! Look at what a comprehensive word Allāh *taʿālā* uses:

وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَّأْتِيْنَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيْقٍ

“and riding upon lean camels – coming from every distant place.” (Sūrah al-H̲ajj, 22: 27)

Allāh *taʿālā* uses the word *d̲āmir* which is normally translated as “a camel”. Whereas in the Arabic language, *d̲āmir* refers to anything which is wide in the centre and narrow in the front and back. The neck of a camel [front] is thin, and its back portion is also thin. The centre of it is wide. The Maulānā then said to me: “If you look at this steamer on which we are travelling – the Muz̲affarī steamer – with which we are going from Bombay to Jeddah, you will notice that its front and rear sections are narrow, while the centre is wide. Thus, the word *d̲āmir* will apply to it as well.” He added: “The shape of an aeroplane is similar. The front and rear sections are narrow, while the centre is broad.”

Look! The Qur’ān uses words which can apply to several things. Those who understood the above word to refer to a camel only are also correct. But there is a need to ponder and reflect on it. You will find many words of this nature in the Qur’ān. It is a most eloquent and unique book.

Do not confine yourselves to Urdu translations

This is why we say that those who are studying *tafsīr* must constantly refer to *al-Mufradāt* of Imām Rāghib *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* and other similar books. We must know the meaning of a word, the facts which the Qur'ān is expounding. As long as we do not study such books, the beauty of the words will not come to our minds. It is my personal experience that the beauty of the words of the Qur'ān will never be understood by us if we confine ourselves to looking at Urdu translations. I saw many Urdu translations translating the following verse:

لاَ يُظْلَمُوْنَ فَتِيْلاً

As: *"they will not be wronged even equal to an iota."*

The Qur'ān uses the words *naqīr, fatīl, qi<u>t</u>mīr* and *dharrah*. For example:

فَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَّرَهُ، وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَّرَهُ

The one who does an iota of good shall see it, and the one who does an iota of evil shall see it.

So we see the Qur'ān using different words to refer to *shay'-e-khafīf* (a minute insignificant amount). Now look at the different Urdu translations of the Qur'ān, viz. of <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Shaykh al-Hind *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*, <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Thānwī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*, Maulānā Sa'īd <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*, Maulānā Fata<u>h</u> Mu<u>h</u>ammad <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*. In all these translations, you will find these four words translated as *dharrah barābar*

(equal to an iota). Now if we confine ourselves to the Urdu translations, how will we learn the beauty of these words and the minute differences between each one. But if you were to refer to *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, you will learn what is *fatīl, naqīr* and *qiṯmīr*. All three have a connection with dates. If you open a date, you will see a thin transparent covering which encloses the date pit. The pit has a type of thread which has a dot. So the first is *fatīl*, then *qiṯmīr* and then *naqīr*. When I looked at *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, I thought to myself: O Allāh! How unique Your speech is! Allāh *taʿālā* uses all these words in the Qur'ān to refer to a minute insignificant amount. Dates was the staple diet of the Arabs. So they could immediately understand what was being referred to. They knew what was *qiṯmīr, naqīr* and so on. We who are living in India or England cannot understand this. We will pass these words countless times in the Qur'ān, open the Urdu translations, and continue translating these words as *dharra barābar* (equal to an iota). But we would not reach the required depths of these words. We have to study *Tafsīr Qurṯubī, Rūẖ al-Maʿāni, Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr* and other *tafāsīr* which delve into the Arabic words and explain the original meanings of these words.

My dear friends! Deep knowledge and correct understanding require striving and remaining focussed. I am trying to bring you to this point of understanding that as long as you do not remain totally devoted to knowledge and do not remain focussed, you will never acquire firmness in knowledge.

This is the type of enthusiasm one should have

Maulānā Mu<u>h</u>ammad <u>H</u>usayn Āzād relates the story of another *ʿālim* who used to live in Lucknow. He heard that there is a person in the opposite end of the city who has a certain hand-written book. There were no printing presses in those days. Books were not as common as they are today. They could not be obtained from bookshops. The *ʿulamā'* used to bring books, copy them with their hands, and memorize them. Nevertheless, this *ʿālim* came to know that a certain person has a rare book, so he went to him although he lived far away. The *ʿālim* lived in one end of the city and the person in the opposite end. It was extremely hot and the *ʿālim* proceeded to his house on foot. He knocked on the door and said: "Bhāi! I have heard that you have a copy of such and such book. Lend it to me, I would like to read it."

Since there were no printing presses in those days, people would not hand over their hand-written copies. It is difficult to lend a book to anyone because very often it is not returned. We used to hear people saying: "The person who lends a book is foolish. And more foolish is the one who returns it after having borrowed it." After hearing this statement, I am cautious about who I lend my books to. But in those days people were very enthusiastic. The *ʿālim* persisted and said: "I have been searching for this book for many years."

The owner of the book found an equitable solution. He said: "I will not give you the entire book. I will give you one part. You may study it, copy it, and return it to me. I will then give you the next part."

There were no photocopying machines in those days. These days things have become very easy. Nevertheless, he would take one part, and read it while walking to his house so that he could get maximum benefit from the book. On reaching home, he would copy it. Once he finished copying it, he would return it. Even on his return trip, he would read it while walking to the person's house. In this way, he went to and fro, and after so much of hard work, was able to copy the entire book.

At this point, the Maulānā writes: How unfortunate! His era was much before us, at a time when there were no printing presses. These days there are many printing presses and books are easily available. Despite this, our *ʿulamā'* do not have such a desire for books as this *ʿālim* had. How many rounds of going to and fro he had to make for just one book! This is the real meaning of striving and working hard for knowledge. A person who acquires knowledge through so much of striving never forgets his knowledge. Knowledge acquired after striving and working hard is firmly embedded in the heart. A thing acquired without hard work and striving is in many cases not appreciated.

What is our goal?

My dear friends! You must therefore strive and work very hard for the sake of knowledge. Study books and prepare yourselves to invite towards Allāh *taʿālā*. The goal of worldly sciences is the acquisition of wealth. Those who obtain high degrees do it for the sole purpose of living a good life. They become doctors so that they can live an easy life. They

become engineers so that they live a comfortable life. All these degrees have one thing in mind: earning wealth and living a good life. But we who are studying in the *madāris* should not have the objective of earning wealth and living an easy life. The sole purpose must be to rectify ourselves, acquire the *maʿrifat* (true recognition) of Allāh *taʿālā*, and then convey the teachings of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* which we learnt to others.

It is necessary to consider the psychology of your addressees

The psychology of each era and each region is different. This is why Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said – and you must have heard this from your teachers:

كَلِّمُوا النَّاسَ عَلَى قَدْرِ عُقُوْلِهِمْ وَأَنْزِلُوا النَّاسَ عَلَى قَدْرِ مَنَازِلِهِمْ

"Address people according to their intellects, and treat them according to their positions."

For example, if you are delivering a talk in a village, you will have to bear in mind the psychology of villagers and address them accordingly. But if you are delivering a talk in a university in London, your addressees will be the educated class. You will have to address them according to their psychology. You will not have to go into too many details.

Just recently, a lawyer was saying to me: "It is very strange, when the *ʿulamā'* sit to deliver a talk, they will repeat one type of sentence for ten minutes to

make us understand just one thing. We are lawyers, we understand a thing by hearing it just once. Why do you [*ʿulamā'*] talk for so long? You say: 'Allāh *taʿālā* created the heavens. Then He created the sun in it. Then He created the moon in it. He then created the stars.' In this way, you list a whole lot of things. Why don't you just say what you have to?" We learn from this that these people do not like too many details.

Siddīqī Sāhib is on the editorial staff of the *Toronto Star*. He is originally from Kāndhla but is very proficient in the English language. If he was not so good, the Jews would not have employed him on their editorial staff. He is a very intelligent man, and came [to Toronto] from Karachi. He called for a meeting with the *imāms* of *masājid*. ʿAbd al-Hayy Patel Sāhib, an engineer, said to me: "Maulānā, come join me. Siddīqī Sāhib is going to address the *imāms*." I asked: "Why?" He replied: "He wants to explain to the *ʿulamā'* how to conduct their lectures which they deliver before the *jumuʿah salāh*. Because when the *ʿulamā'* sit on the *mimbar* (pulpit) they do not take the time into consideration. Sometimes they will talk for ten minutes, and sometimes for fifteen. But then seven minutes are spent in the introduction alone. The *ʿālim* must think for himself. If he has fifteen minutes to talk, and he spends seven minutes in the introduction, when will he complete his entire subject? So he continues with his talk while people constantly look at their watches. Many of them come from their jobs and have to return immediately after the salāh. So they return without performing their *sunnats*. They

leave once the [*fard*] salāh is over. Siddīqī Sāhib wants to inform the *'ulamā'* that they have to take all these factors into consideration." Where are you talking? What time limit do you have? In what position are you at present? How should you speak? The *'ulamā'* have to learn these things.

The need to be prepared according to the conditions

The other thing is that we have to be prepared for the conditions. My dear friends! New issues and new challenges are cropping up daily. You have to combat these challenges in a scientific manner so that your opposition accepts. If you explain Qur'ānic verses alone, it may appeal to the villagers, the senior and old people who remain seated in the musjid, and our elderly people who have come over from India or Pakistan. But it will not appeal to our youngsters of today. But if you explain something in a scientific way, they will accept.

For example, you say to them that the issue of pollution is very important. People give a lot of attention to this issue. You may have seen the "no smoking" signs in the airports, because smoking is very unhealthy and discomforting. On such an occasion, you must quote to them the Ahādīth in which Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* prohibited urinating and relieving one's self under a tree. Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* cursed the one who urinates on the water's edge. So is this not an issue concerning pollution? But if you were to quote these Ahādīth to people in America, they will say: "This was said 1500 years ago."

When we go to Mumbai and the train reaches Mumbai Central Station, we see large boards in Gujarati, Hindi and English saying: “Save water”, “Save electricity”. I said to the *ʿulamā’*: “Did Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* not say that you must not use more water than necessary even when you are on the banks of a river?” These people [unbelievers] are advertising things which were taught to us by Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* 1 400 years ago. If you explain these things to people, they will realize that Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* taught us these “small” things as well. There are many such teachings in our Islam.

If western doctors and scientists were to research all the things which Islam has prohibited, they will conclude that they are all harmful to man [this is why they are prohibited]. Many people have researched to find out the reason behind the prohibition of alcohol. They found that it is extremely harmful. Now millions of rupees are being spent by our government in India encouraging people not to drink alcohol. Whereas Allāh *taʿālā* said with reference to it over 1 400 years ago:

إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالأَنْصَابُ وَالأَزْلاَمُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ، فَاجْتَنِبُوْهُ

“This wine, gambling, idols, and divining arrows are all vile deeds of Satan. Continually abstain from them.” (Sūrah al-Mā’idah, 5: 90)

Allāh *taʿālā* said this over 1 400 years ago, and these people are now distributing pamphlets, placing huge boards on vehicles and trains advising the people to

give up alcohol. Whereas Islam had put an end to it long ago.

If you explain to people the issues which are affecting them today, and you present these to them in a scientific manner, they will realize what Islam is. There is a need for us to change our approach. We have many facts in our Qur'ān and Hadīth. You will have to present them in a new way, and in a way which would appeal to the youth. They must know the harms and benefits of these different things.

Three essential points

The first thing is for you to acquire knowledge with full concentration. Secondly, you have to know the conditions and situations of the time. Thirdly, you must strengthen your bond with Allāh *taʿālā*. Guidance is not in my control nor in the control of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِنَّكَ لاَ تَهْدِيْ مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللهَ يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَاءُ

"Surely you cannot guide whom you like. Rather, Allāh guides whomever He wills."

However, the different efforts for guidance have to be done by us. The essential thing is to have a bond with Allāh *taʿālā*, the heart has to be pure. When the heart is attached to Allāh *taʿālā*, He instils an effect and influence in whatever the person says. When anything emanates from the heart with sincerity, Allāh *taʿālā* confers it with blessings. Our pious elders were genuine believers and extremely sincere.

They used to cry before Allāh *taʿālā* at night. They used to wake up in the latter part of the night and make *duʿā* for their own guidance and for the guidance of the *ummah*.

A shortage of people who cry

I read an article written by Maulānā Yūsuf S̲āh̲ib Ludhyānwī *rah̲imahullāh* is which he said: "How sorrowful! The number of people who cry in the *ummah* has dropped drastically. There are very few people who cry." Previously, you would even find people in the villages who used to get up early and proceed to the musjid. Some will be busy in *tahajjud s̲alāh*, others will be sitting in one corner and crying before Allāh *taʿālā*. Now if you look, you will find people only coming to the musjid after the *adhān*. That environment as described in the following verse of the Qur'ān is coming to an end:

وَبِالأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ

"They seek forgiveness in the early dawn."

This is essential for a person inviting and calling towards Allāh *taʿālā*. He must strive hard for the acquisition of knowledge, acquire correct understanding of knowledge, apply it to his life, and then develop a restless heart for Allāh's servants. A restless heart is the basis for success. If you eat good food, you will become healthy, your blood will increase, but there is no benefit in it.

ʿAllāmah Iqbāl says:

> "If blood is flowing forcefully in your body, of what benefit is it? There is nothing better than having a restless heart."

What is life? It is having a restless heart. It means you must be pained and discomforted when you see Allāh's servants astray, and His creation in suffering. This pain and discomfort had made Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam restless by day and night. Allāh *taʿālā* addresses him as follows:

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ أَلاَّ يَكُوْنُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ

"You may perhaps kill yourself over the fact that they do not believe." (Sūrah ash-Shuʿarā', 26: 3)

Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam used to be very disturbed over the fact that these servants of Allāh *taʿālā* are eating of His bounties but are still cut off from Him. How should I connect them to Allāh *taʿālā*? If this pain and concern develops in our students before they qualify and devote their lives to inviting towards Allāh's *Dīn* and striving for it; they will not study with the intention of becoming an *imām*, a teacher somewhere, of earning a lot of money, of becoming famous, or for the sake of having one's theses published, and so on. My dear friends! This is definitely not the purpose of our life.

What is the soul of all sciences?

The purpose of our life is to get the recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*. We must become concerned about what our position will be when we depart from this world and are presented before Allāh *taʿālā*. The

development of this consciousness is the essence of knowledge. Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī *rahimahullāh* refers to this as true knowledge. He says: "The soul and essence of all sciences is when you realize what your position will be on the day of Resurrection."

People used to consider me a senior *ʿālim* when I was in this world. They addressed me as a *khatīb, imām,* etc. but when I am going to die tomorrow and I go before Allāh *taʿālā*, what will my condition be? Hakīm Akhtar Sāhib – may Allāh *taʿālā* give him long life – sometimes explains unique facts in very simple words. He quotes a poem which means: "No matter how we lived in this world and how much popularity we gained, the real thing to worry about is what our position is going to be before Allāh *taʿālā*."

He explains this in very simple words: A bride was made to wear the best clothes and beautified by making her wear jewellery. Her friends then began praising her. But she started to cry. They asked: "Why are you crying?" She replied: "You are all praising me and saying that I am looking very attractive and beautiful. But your praises will only be worth anything when I go to my in-laws' house and my husband considers me to be attractive. If my husband does not like how I look, all your praises will be worthless."

Hakīm Sāhib says: This is my and your situation. The entire world may shower praises on us and say: Look at what an excellent man this Maulānā is! What inspiring talks he delivers! And so on. All this will not help him in any way. The question is

whether our actions are accepted by Allāh *taʿālā* or not. Every student and person serving *Dīn* needs to worry about what his rank will be in Allāh's sight, and what his position will be on the day of Resurrection. Nevertheless, the previously quoted poem of Maulānā Jalāluddīn Rūmī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* is most exceptional: "The soul and essence of all sciences is when you realize what your position will be on the day of Resurrection."

May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to understand this and enable us to live our life accordingly.

The need to remain a student for the rest of your life

My dear friends! I had said previously that I am not in the habit of delivering talks. My discussion is a student's discussion. I am a student, and you are also students. The only difference is that my time is a bit before yours. It is just a matter of who arrived first and who came later on. Apart from this, we are equal. I am also treading the path of knowledge. I read books on a daily basis. Sometimes, I read 40-50 pages at a time. This is my daily practice. It is so because we are students for as long as we live. If a person does not consider himself to be a student until the very last breath, he cannot acquire knowledge. May Allāh *taʿālā* bestow you with beneficial knowledge. Āmīn.

Have you understood whatever I said? First of all, you must work very hard. You must acquire in-depth knowledge while remaining focussed and devoted to your studies. Then practise on this

knowledge and make a firm intention of striving for this *Dīn* of Allāh *taʿālā* until the very last. You will get the life which is destined to you. It will not go anywhere else.

الرزق مقسوم والحريص محروم

"Your sustenance has been decided [by Allāh], and the greedy person remains deprived."

وَمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ فِي الأَرْضِ إِلاَّ عَلَى اللهِ رِزْقُهَا

There is no creature on earth whose sustenance is not on Allāh.

You should therefore not run after it. You should rather concern yourself to Allāh *taʿālā* taking such work from you which will enable you to stand with your head high on the day of Resurrection. Serve *Dīn* with the intention of salvation on the day of Resurrection. If we are able to develop this, the purpose of this *madrasah* will be achieved.

May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to practise on whatever was said. Āmīn.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين.

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد كما تحب وترضى وعدد ما تحب وترضى.

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد. اللهم بارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما باركت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد.

ربنا ظلمنا أنفسنا وإن لم تغفر لنا وترحمنا لنكونن من الخاسرين.

ربنا لا تزغ قلوبنا بعد إذ هديتنا وهب لنا من لدنك رحمة إنك أنت الوهاب.

اللهم اجعلنا هادين مهتدين غير ضالين ولا مضلين سلما لأوليائك وحربا لأعدائك.

اللهم إنا نسئلك الهدى والتقى والعفاف والغنى.

أللهم إنا نسئلك فعل الخيرات.

اللهم إن قلوبنا ونوصينا وجوارحنا بيدك لم تملكنا منها شيئا، فإذا فعلت ذلك بنا فكن أنت ولينا واهدنا إلى سواء السبيل.

اللهم آت نفوسنا تقواها وزكها أنت خير من زكاها، أنت وليها ومولاها.

اللهم إنا نسئلك علما نافعا، ورزقا واسعا، وشفاء من كل داء.

اللهم ربنا تقبل منا إنك أنت السميع العليم، وتب علينا إنك أنت التواب الرحيم.

وصلى الله على خير خلقه سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين، برحمتك يا أرحم الراحمين.

THE NEED FOR AND IMPORTANCE OF QUR'ĀN LESSONS

Talk delivered in Musjid-e-Nūr, Leicester on 17 November 1996

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين، سيدنا ومولانا وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين.

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ أَقْوَمُ﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

The purpose behind the revelation of the Qur'ān

My dear elders and brothers! When I learnt that Qur'ān lessons in Urdu and English are conducted in this city, I became very happy. Allāh *taʿālā* revealed this Book so that it may be read to the people of this world and they may learn what course of action they must follow in their lives. The purpose of this book is for us to read it, to set right our lives, and to abstain from anything which earns Allāh's *taʿālā* displeasure.

Rasūlullāh *s̱allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said:

إِنَّ اللهَ يَرْفَعُ بِهَذَا الْكِتَابِ أَقْوَامًا، وَيَضَعُ بِهِ آخَرِيْنَ

"Allāh taʿālā shall elevate certain nations through this Book, and debase others through it."

The first group will read the Qur'ān and practise on it. Other nations will cast aside the Qur'ān, turn away from it, and leave it on shelves. Such people will have to suffer degradation. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us from this.

This is why I said that these Qur'ān lessons are very important. They must continue regularly in every musjid.

Two lessons in jail

We always quote the statement of H͟ad͟rat Shaykh al-Hind *rah͟imahullāh*. When he returned from prison in Malta, he was seated before many senior erudite *ʿulamā'*, personalities who were *shaykh al-H͟adīth, shaykh at-tafsīr* and muftīs. H͟ad͟rat *rah͟imahullāh* made this statement in a very weak voice: "Brothers! I learnt two lessons in the prison of Malta." On hearing this, all the *ʿulamā'* came to attention and wanted to know what a senior *shaykh* leant in a prison. H͟ad͟rat *rah͟imahullāh* then said: "One lesson is that we must connect the *ummah* to the Qur'ān. As long as this *ummah* does not maintain contact with the Qur'ān and is not interested in studying and teaching this Book, no good can come into this *ummah*. The second lesson is that you must endeavour to create unity in the *ummah*."

Today, there is nothing but disunity in the *ummah*. Wherever you look, you will find broken up factions of the *ummah*. And the best way of creating unity is to make the teachings of the Qur'ān common. It was solely through this Qur'ān that Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* brought different nations, people of different countries, people of different progenies and complexions, and people of different tribes and families onto one single platform. Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* announced that the only position of honour in Allāh's *taʿālā* sight will be given to the person who has the most *taqwā*. This is not dependent on family background, regional affiliation, or language connection - whether the person speaks Arabic or Urdu. If an Arab is weak in *taqwā*, he has no value in Allāh's sight.

Equality in Islam

A woman belonging to a noble family was caught stealing. According to the Sharīʿah, her hand was to be chopped off. No one had the courage to go an intercede on her behalf to Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The people prompted H̲ad̲rat Zayd ibn H̲ārithah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu*, the special attendant of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and his "adopted son", to intercede on their behalf. When he interceded before Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, the effects of anger became clearly visible on his face and he said:

أَتَشْفَعُوْنَ فِيْ حَدٍّ مِّنْ حُدُوْدِ اللهِ، وَاللهِ لَوْ كَانَتْ فَاطِمَةُ بِنْتُ مُحَمَّدٍ سَرَقَتْ لَقَطَعْتُ يَدَهَا.

"Are you interceding with regard to one of the penal laws of Allāh!? By Allāh, if Fāṯimah bint Muẖammad steals, I will chop off her hand."

This is justice. The society which Rasūlullāh *s̱allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* created was moulded by virtue of this Qur'ān. We should therefore conduct Qur'ān lessons, and ponder over each and every verse.

The difference in temperament between believers and unbelievers

H̱aḏrat instructed me to say a few words, so this verse came into my mind. Every verse of the Qur'ān shows man the path. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوْبُ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ.

"When the name of Allāh alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter become vexed. And when the name of those other than Him is mentioned, they rejoice." (Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 45)

The Qur'ān is a unique book. This verse shows the mindset and psychology of two nations. When Allāh *taʿālā* is mentioned before the unbelievers, they become vexed. Nations who do not believe in Allāh *taʿālā* and the Last Day become vexed and agitated when Allāh's name is mentioned. Some of you are

from the villages. You know how vexed people become when they see bullocks. So the temperament of the unbelievers is that they severely detest any mention of Allāh *taʿālā* and matters related to His *Dīn*. They become irritated and flee. But when anyone other than Allāh *taʿālā* is mentioned before them, they beam with happiness. This verse describes the psychology of unbelief. It is a mirror for us. We must examine what our psychology is, and what our condition is at the moment. This is something to think about. Some Muslims' temperament has become such that they are most displeased when anything about Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *s̱allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* is spoken in their presence. Their facial expressions become like a person who has been burdened with a very heavy weight. They are not prepared to listen to any *Dīnī* talk for even five minutes.

The state of our youth

People say that these *maulwīs* keep on talking. What is the opinion of our youth with regard to the talks which are generally delivered before the *jumuʿah s̱alāh*? I am relating a personal incident. Some youngsters in India were sitting outside the musjid before the *jumuʿah s̱alāh*. I was climbing the stairs, and when I came up I said: "Brothers, the Maulānā is delivering a talk and you are sitting here outside? Go inside." One youngster replied: "These *maulwīs* only scream and shout." I did not say anything to him. I understood that our *īmān* has reached such a low level that our youngsters do not want to listen to

anything concerning *Dīn*. This verse came to mind at the time:

إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوْبُ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالآخِرَةِ

"When the name of Allāh alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter become vexed." (Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 45)

But when it comes to a cricket match, a television programme or some other function, these same youth will stand for hours in the severe cold, and this will not disturb them in any way. But they are not prepared to give five minutes to listen to something about *Dīn*. You will see the youth over here [in England] as well, standing outside in the gardens, on pavements for hours at a time. They will stand for two hours in a queue to enter a cinema, but they do not have ten minutes to listen to something about *Dīn*. This is the temperament of unbelief (*kufr*). The Qur'ān is saying this to us. We read the Qur'ān but because we do not ponder and reflect on it, we do not know the lessons contained in each and every verse. We neither know the translation of the Qur'ān, nor can we take some time out to go to the *ʿulamā'* and ask them to explain the meaning of a certain verse, and what Allāh *taʿālā* is saying to us.

The Qur'ān: a revolutionary book

My dear friends! The Qur'ān is a mirror in which we can see ourselves. The very same Saḫābah *raḏiyallāhu ʿanhum* who were not worth anything in

this world, who continued fighting against themselves, and who knew nothing became leaders of the entire world by virtue of the Qur'ān. They led the world in a manner which was unparalleled. Senior academics who study history have realized that no nation has produced a person like ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*. No one produced a personality like ʿUmar *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu*. It is the same Qur'ān which turned Ibn Kha<u>tt</u>āb to ʿUmar Fārūq *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu*. He used to read the verses of the same Qur'ān and cry before Allāh *taʿālā*. <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Abū Bakr *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu* used to get up in the night for *tahajjud* and read this same Qur'ān. He used to read in such a beautiful tone that the women would come out to listen to him. <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat ʿAlī *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhu* used to wake up in the latter part of the night and read this same Qur'ān. He would hold his beard and say: "O world! Get away from me, go and delude someone else. I have issued three divorces to you."

They would read a single verse again and again, and the entire night would pass in the process. Rasūlullāh *<u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* said: "Sūrah Hūd has caused me to become old." When the <u>S</u>a<u>h</u>ābah *ra<u>d</u>iyallāhu ʿanhum* asked him the reason, he said that it contains a verse which instructs us to remain steadfast. Worry and concern about this has made me old. Just one verse of the Qur'ān had such an effect on him that the effects of old age became visible on him. When a person says something and then remains firm on it, we refer to it as steadfastness (*istiqāmat*). This quality is not found in us today. The best way of remaining steadfast in this

environment [of the west] and remaining connected to Allāh *taʿālā* is for us to remain attached to the Qur'ān.

All sciences are doubtful

My dear brothers! This Qur'ān was not sent down to be wrapped in silk covers and placed on shelves. It is a book of guidance: *"A guidance for those who fear Allāh."* Allāh *taʿālā* says: *Alif Lām Mīm. This is a book in which there is no doubt."* All worldly sciences are doubtful. The proof of this is that you will get the greatest scientist in the world publishing a certain theory which the entire world accepts, and feels that there is no theory better than it. Within 20-25 years another scientist comes and says that what the previous scientist had said was wrong. The new research suggests otherwise. If you were to check, you will find many theories which the scientists made from time to time but were all changed and altered again and again.

But you will never find any changes in the facts presented by the Qur'ān. This is an absolute fact about the Qur'ān. In the very beginning, Allāh *taʿālā* says: *"This is a book in which there is no doubt."* It is a book of guidance for those who want to lead a life of piety. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to understand these verses. May Allāh *taʿālā* change our mindset. I fear the mindset of unbelief mentioned in the previously quoted verse must not come into us. Let it not happen that when the words of Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *s̱allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* are mentioned before us, we consider them to be a burden. Let us not say that these *maulwīs* ask us to

sit for *Dīnī* talks daily. Saying this, you wear your shoes and depart. This is the temperament of unbelief. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us.

The condition of Muslims

Muslims ought to have such enthusiasm that when they hear about Qur'ān lessons or H̲adīth lessons, and they are outside at the time, they must rush inside to attend these lessons because Allāh *taʿālā* and Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* are being spoken about. *Allāhu akbar!* If a person loves someone and a story about him is being related to him, he will listen to it very attentively. We must check the level of our love for Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* Do we really love the Qur'ān? Do we love the Ah̲ādīth of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*?

Our condition is such that when Allāh's verses are recited, we flee. This is an evil quality.

إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَأَزَّتْ قُلُوْبُ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالآخِرَةِ وَإِذَا ذُكِرَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ.

"When the name of Allāh alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter become vexed. And when the name of those other than Him is mentioned, they rejoice." (Sūrah az-Zumar, 39: 45)

May Allāh *taʿālā* bless us with love for the Qur'ān and the Ah̲ādīth. May He change our thinking, enable us to give due importance to the Book of

Allāh, listen to it attentively when it is taught, and listen to it with the intention of practising on it. The greatest respect to it is for a person to sit with the intention of applying whichever verse he hears to his life. The Sahābah *radiyallāhu ʿanhum* heard the verses of the Qur'ān and adopted them in their lives. And so, Allāh *taʿālā* made them successful.

My dear brothers! Even today, success is promised through it. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

اَنْتُمُ الاَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ

"You are the highest, provided you are believers."

This is Allāh's *taʿālā* promise. He made success dependent on it. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to tread the path shown to us by the Qur'ān.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين.

اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد وبارك وسلم.

ربنا ظلمنا أنفسنا وإن لم تغفر لنا وترحمنا لنكونن من الخاسرين.

اللهم وفقنا لما تحب وترضى واجعل آخرتنا خيرا من الأولى.

اللهم ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار.

اللهم ربنا اغفر لنا ذنوبنا وإسرافنا في أمرنا وثبت أقدامنا وانصرنا على القوم الكافرين.

اللهم اكفنا بحلالك عن حرامك وأغننا بفضلك عمن سواك.

اللهم ربنا لا تؤاخذنا إن نسينا أو أخطأنا، ربنا ولا تحمل علينا إصرا كما حملته على الذين من قبلنا.

ربنا ولا تحملنا ما لا طاقة لنا به، واعف عنا، وغفر لنا، وارحمنا، أنت مولانا فانصرنا على القوم الكافرين.

THE HISTORICAL STATUS OF COMPLETION OF BUKHĀRĪ

Talk delivered in Jāmiʻah Riyād al-ʻUlūm, Leicester, on the occasion of completion of *Bukhārī Sharīf*, 29 September 2003

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله الذي بنعمته تتم الصالحات، والصلوة والسلام على أشرف الموجودات وأكبر المخلوقات سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وعلماء أمته وعلى من تبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين، أما بعد!

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

The honourable ʻAllāmah Muftī Muhammad Taqī Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum al-ʻāliyah*, who has just left for some work and will return shortly. The founder and Shaykh al-Hadīth of Jāmiʻah Riyād al-ʻUlūm and Islamic Academy, Hadrat Maulānā Salīm Sāhib *hafizahullāh*, teachers of Hadīth, muftis, respected *ʻulamā'*, and my dear students and sisters.

The blessings of the sincerity of our pious elders

Today is a very blessed and joyous occasion in the history of Leicester. I am seeing such a large gathering of Muslims, and my mind went to some pious servants of Allāh *taʿālā* in India who – about 150 years ago – cried profusely before Allāh *taʿālā* and made *duʿā* to Him. Our elders, Sayyid at-Tā'ifah Hadrat Hājī Imdādullāh Muhājir Makkī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Sāhib Gangohī *rahimahullāh*, Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Nānautwī *rahimahullāh*, Hājī ʿĀbid Husayn Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and their associates looked at the situation in India. Some people from outside had come into India with the intention of wiping out Islam, and wiping out all traces of Muslims in India. Our pious elders did not have any material means to combat them. They began getting up at night and crying before Allāh *taʿālā*. Through the blessings of their *duʿās* and sobbing before Allāh *taʿālā*, He put it in their hearts to lay the foundations for a *madrasah*. Consequently, a place of learning was opened with one teacher and one student under a pomegranate tree. The teacher himself possessed praiseworthy qualities, and so did the student. And so, the results were obviously remarkable. We are now seeing the fruits of that "tree" which was planted there.

We are now sitting in the country of those very people who had come to wipe out Islam in India. Look at Allāh's power! Allāh *taʿālā* does as He wills. Everything is under His control. The people of the world can make whatever plans they like, but if

Allāh *taʿālā* does not will it, nothing will happen. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to turn to Him just as our pious elders turned to Him when there seemed to be no hope at all.

They turned to him, initiated this blessed *silsilah* (chain), and the result of it is that in a city like Leicester, *Daurah-e-Hadīth* (final year of the *ʿālim* course) is being taught in three different *madāris*. *Daurah-e-Hadīth* is taught in the *madrasah* of Hadrat Maulānā Ādam Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*, the *khatam* (completion) of *Bukhārī* was done in the *madrasah* of Hadrat Maulānā Ismāʿīl Sāhib yesterday, a *khatam* is done here today, there will be a *khatam* in Bury, another one in Blackburn, and another one in Dār al-ʿUlūm London.

Glory to Allāh! Look at the effects of the *duʿās* of our pious elders. If this is not their *karāmat* then what is? May Allāh *taʿālā* shower millions of blessings on those pious elders.

اَللّٰهُمَّ أَمْطِرْ عَلَيْهِمْ شَئَابِيْبَ رَحْمَتِكَ وَرِضْوَانِكَ

"O Allāh! Send down the rains of Your mercy and pleasure on them."

It is through their efforts that these students in this country are sitting here before us. Their effulgent faces are shining, and because of an affiliation with them, such a large number of Muslims are present here today. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us in every way, and may He elevate this *Dīn*.

Islam is not to be wiped out

This *Dīn* has come to stay, it did not come to be wiped out. Maulānā ʿAbd al-Mājid Budāyūnī was a powerful orator. He came to Dhābel when I was a student. I clearly remember this one statement from his speech: "O people! Listen! Falsehood overflows, but never remains in place. Truth may be suppressed, but is never wiped out."

It may seem to us that the truth is down and falsehood has the upper hand, but if you have the treasure of *īmān* and conviction in your heart, you will firmly believe that falsehood will certainly be wiped out, and truth will prevail. This is on condition we follow the way of life presented to us by Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

وَأَنْتُمُ الأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ

"You shall be the highest if you are really believers."

All you have to do is fulfil the condition of *īmān*, and Allāh *taʿālā* will certainly bless you with high ranks.

The simplicity of our pious elders

It is a great honour for us in that a distinguished personality of the Islamic world (H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Muftī Muh̲ammad Taqī ʿUthmānī S̲āh̲ib *dāmat barakātuhum*) has been invited to this *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf*. He will arrive soon and conduct the *khatam*.

His appearance is extremely simple. If you were to meet him on a street, you will never believe he is such a great *ʿālim* of the Islamic world. He neither wears a *sherwānī* (a type of long coat) nor a turban. When the Arabs see him, they are astonished.

When Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā [Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī] Sāhib *rahimahullāh* went to Syria he was dressed in very simple clothes because simplicity was part of his temperament. The Arab *ʿulamā'* of the time wrote the following observation about him:

رأينا أبا الحسن علي الحسني الندوي خفيف الجسم وخفيف اللباس

"We found Abul Hasan ʿAlī al-Hasanī an-Nadwī to be thin-bodied, wearing simple clothes."

When Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* went to Syria, he wore the same *kurtahs* which he used to wear in India. This despite the fact that he was invited to Damascus University as a visiting professor. This is also one of the salient features of our *ʿulamā'*, viz. they have no formalities. A living example of this will come to you in a short while. He is an erudite *ʿālim* of the Islamic world whose equal is difficult to find, yet he is so simple.

The contribution and status of Muftī Muhammad Taqī Sāhib

Just recently I was reading his book, *Takmilah Fath al-Mulhim*. Hadrat ʿAllāmah Shabbīr Ahmad ʿUthmānī *rahimahullāh* had commenced writing a commentary to *Muslim Sharīf*. This was a unique commentary. But by the will of Allāh *taʿālā*, he

completed only about half of it when he passed away. This book remained incomplete for many years. Allāh *taʿālā* inspired Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Muhammad Taqī ʿUthmānī Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* to complete it. When the completed book was presented to the Arab *ʿulamā'*, they wrote laudable reviews and evaluations of it. I saw the reviews of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah *rahimahullāh* who was a senior researcher of Syria, Shaykh Yūsuf Qardāwī Sāhib, the muftī of Tunisia, and the review of Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. The laudable words which they used are beyond imagination. What great opinions they must have had about Hadrat Maulānā Muftī Taqī Sāhib! Look at what Shaykh Qardāwī says:

فقد وجدت في هذا الشرح حس المحدث، وملكة الفقيه، وعقلية المعلم، وأناة القاضي، ورؤية العالم المعاصر جنبا إلى جنب.

"I found the writer of this commentary to possess the perception of a muhaddith (Hadīth scholar), the expertise of a jurist, the psychology of a teacher, the deliberation of a judge, and the vision of a contemporary scholar all at one and the same time."

The words of a distinguished research scholar like Shaykh Yūsuf Qardāwī about a distinguished research scholar like the Maulānā could be explained in much detail. Maulānā is an expert in Hadīth, he is a muftī, a jurist, and a chief judge of the Sharīʿah court.

My dear friends! There will come a time when these students of ours and the others who are present here will say with pride that they saw Maulānā Muhammad Taqī ʿUthmānī Sāhib, even though the world may not value him today.

Together with teaching, instructing, issuing *fatāwā*, and various other services, Allāh *taʿālā* conferred him with a special quality, and that is *iʿtidāl-e-fikr* (a balance in his thinking). Because Hadrat Maulānā is not present at the moment, I am going into some detail about him. If he was present here, it would have been difficult for me to say these things.

The excellent quality which Allāh *taʿālā* conferred on him is *iʿtidāl-e-fikr* (balance in thinking). Hadrat's thinking and his pen [writing] are both very balanced. You can read thousands of pages of his writings, you will not find any needless excitement, nor any harsh criticism of anyone. When he writes any *mas'alah* (issue, ruling), he writes in clear and unambiguous words. You will not find any confusion or complexity in it. Hadrat explains a *mas'alah* in clear simple words. This, despite the fact that he conducts *Bukhārī Sharīf* lessons, *fiqh* lessons, goes to huge academies, and so on.

He came to America two years ago. About 200 people had assembled in a hotel, and the majority of them were senior Jewish lawyers. All the discussions were in English. I did not go myself because I learnt that everything will take place in English and I don't know English. But a friend of mine in Toronto by the name of ʿAbd al-Hayy Patel, who is an engineer and

has close contact with Maulānā went to New York and attended this conference.

When he returned, I asked: "Patel S̲āh̲ib! How did it go?" Many senior lawyers had assembled in New York and Maulānā's lecture was on economics. So he said to me: "I was very surprised because one lawyer after the other would stand up and question Maulānā. And they did not confine their questions to economics – for which the assembly was held – but also raised other issues about Islam. Some of them used a very offensive approach, but Maulānā continued answering their questions in a calm and collected manner. Some professors were speaking among themselves, and saying: 'This person looks like a nobody, but he is filled with knowledge.'" This was the impression of senior Jewish lawyers and professors of America.

Many academics attest to his intelligence. What a great bounty of Allāh *taʿālā* that this great personality is here today with us in Leicester. We will have an opportunity of seeing him and listening to his lecture.

The *ummah's* attachment with *Bukhārī Sharīf*

My dear brothers! The book which we are about to complete is *S̲ah̲īh̲ Bukhārī*, regarding which you may have heard repeatedly:

أصح الكتب بعد كتاب الله الجامع الصحيح للبخاري

"The most authentic book after the Book of Allāh is al-Jāmiʿ as̲-S̲ah̲īh̲ of Bukhārī."

This is the unanimous opinion of the majority of the *ummah*. It paid particular attention to this book and perceived its blessings. There were great *h̲uffāz̲* of it in the Arab lands; in Egypt, Syria, Morocco, Spain, etc. So these lands paid much attention to it. As for our subcontinent, there was a lot of interest in this book. I say "subcontinent" because in those days, Pakistan and Bangladesh were not in existence. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh – all together – are referred to as the "subcontinent".

The interest shown to this book can be gauged from what Maulānā ʿAbd al-H̲ayy S̲āh̲ib al-H̲asanī *rah̲imahullāh* wrote. He says that Maulānā ʿAbd al-Malik S̲āh̲ib ʿAbbāsī had memorized the entire *S̲ah̲īh̲ Bukhārī* – the text together with the *asānīd* (plural of *sanad*, chains of transmission). He used to conduct *Bukhārī Sharīf* lessons, but there was no need to open the book. It is a very voluminous book, just imagine how difficult it is to memorize!

He mentions with regard to another *ʿālim*:

كان يحفظ سبعين ألف حديث

"He knew 70 000 Ah̲ādīth from memory."

Nevertheless, our people in India and Pakistan paid a lot of attention to this book. And much interest has been shown to it for many many years. When we read about some of the *ʿulamā'*, we are astonished [at their attachment to this book].

The ruler's interest in *Bukhārī Sharīf*

In his book, *Ni<u>z</u>am Ta'līm wa Tarbiyat*, Maulānā Manā<u>z</u>ir A<u>h</u>san Gīlānī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* makes mention of a ruler who was in charge of running a large section of Punjab. He lived in a very opulent way with many servants and attendants at his beck and call. Look at the academic interest of those days. He was a governor of a region, he had to see to the affairs of an entire region, he led a life of comfort, he had servants at his side, he travelled with an army. Maulānā Gīlānī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* writes that when he was seventy years old, he wrote *<u>S</u>a<u>h</u>ī<u>h</u> Bukhārī* and *<u>S</u>a<u>h</u>ī<u>h</u> Muslim* with his hands. Not only did he write it, he also wrote marginal notes to it.

At this point, Maulānā Gīlānī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* writes his personal feelings in this regard. He says: When nations are conferred with "life", then these are the types of achievements we see. And when they are "dead", then their melancholy is very painful. When nations are "alive" a seventy year old man will go to the pains of hand-writing the entire *<u>S</u>a<u>h</u>ī<u>h</u> Bukhārī* and *<u>S</u>a<u>h</u>ī<u>h</u> Muslim* and add marginal notes to it despite all his other responsibilities. Look at the enthusiasm of our elders!

Look at the interest Allāh's servants had in this book! We are relating these incidents to you because we are students. When we read such stories, we get a lot of guidance from the lives of our elders. This will increase our own courage. We will think to ourselves: These were our elders who devoted their entire lives to this book. What have we done for it? What is our situation? We must reflect over this, and

study the lives of our elders; they are lighthouses for us.

أولئك آبائي فجئني بمثلهم – إذا جمعتنا يا جرير المجامع

"Such were my forefathers. O Jarīr! Bring me someone similar to them when we assemble."

These were our forefathers and our pious predecessors. If anyone has the courage, let him produce anyone similar to them.

Nevertheless, this was the attention to and interest in *Bukhārī Sharīf*.

The *khatam* of *Bukhārī* in Gujarat 400 years ago

I am now going to speak about something else in line with our theme of *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf*. The practice of *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* took place in our Gujarat 450 years ago. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Hadramī has written a book titled, *an-Nūr as-Sāfir ʿan Akhbār al-Qarn al-ʿĀshir*. It contains lives and biographies of people who lived in the tenth century.

He states that Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir Hadramī used to live in Ahmadābād. Many *ʿulamā'* of Hadramaut lived in Sūrat, Ahmadābād and Bharūch.

في رجب سنة أربع وسبعين بعد تسع مائة ختم صحيح البخاري عند الأمير الصالح الفخان الحبشي بقراءة العلامة القاضي جمال الدين المهائمي

"In Rajab 974 A.H. a khatam of Sahīh Bukhārī was made under the auspices of the righteous ruler, al-

Fakhān al-Habshī, and it was read before ʿAllāmah Qādī Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Muhā'imī."

We learn from the above that even in those times, they used to make *khatam* under a senior *ʿālim*. ʿAllāmah Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Muhā'imī was invited for this purpose. The ruler of Ahmadābād at the time invited him and requested him to make the *khatam*. The book states further on:

وعمل الفخان لختمه ضيافة عظيمة

"al-Fakhān made huge arrangements for hosting the khatam."

Maulānā Salīm Sāhib has also invited you here. There is no need for you to worry, he has also kept alive a practice of 450 years.

وأنشأ القاضي المهائمي في فضل البخاري خطبة

"Qādī al-Muhā'imī delivered a talk on the merits of al-Bukhārī."

We learn from this that even in those times, something about *Bukhārī Sharīf* was said before the actual *khatam* itself. After reading this, I felt I should say a few things to our students. Our students read very few history books. This is why they do not know that a *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* was made in Ahmadābād 450 years ago. I read the text to you in this regard.

Another *khatam* was made in 985 A.H.

وفي سنة خمس وثمانين كان ختم صحيح البخاري بحضرة سيدي الوالد

"A khatam of Bukhārī was made in 985 A.H. in the presence of my respected father."

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir H̲ad̲ramī's father was a senior *ʿālim*, and the *khatam* was made in his presence.

وأنشأ الشيخ عبد المعطي في ذلك قصيدة طفانة

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Muʿt̲ī Bākathīr was a H̲ad̲ramī *ʿālim* in Sūrat. In those times, his *sanad* was considered to be the highest in the whole of India. There are about two mediums between himself and H̲āfiz̲ Ibn H̲ajar *rah̲imahullāh*. He used to live in Sūrat, but passed away in Ah̲madābād. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir H̲ad̲ramī invited him to Ah̲madābād so he travelled from Sūrat to this city. Together with being a great H̲adīth scholar, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Muʿt̲ī Bākathīr was also a litterateur of the Arabic language. He read a long anthology in that assembly about *Bukhārī Sharīf* and its *khatam*. I saw this anthology in *an-Nūr as-Sāfir*. It contains 46 lines of poetry. I will quote a few lines to show you the level of poetry of those days.

حَدِيْثُ نَبِيِّ اللهِ جَدِّكَ أَحْمَدُ – وَسِيْرَتُهُ قَوْلٌ وَفِعْلٌ مفصل

مُنَقَّحَةٌ جَمْعُ البخاري مَنْ لَهُ – لِصحَّةِ تَحْرِيرِ الحديث تَوَصُّلُ

"The H̲adīth and life of Allāh's Nabī is fully explained in his words and actions. The collection of Bukhārī is most authentic. The person who has a little contact

with Bukhārī Sharīf will realize how his narrations are sifted."

أصح كتاب في الحديث لانه – منقح من حديث الرواة مغربل

"It is the most authentic book of Hadīth because the Ahādīth of the narrators have been thoroughly sifted."

The word *ghirbāl (mugharbal)* refers to a sieve like the one used to sift flour and remove all dirt from it. The Ahādīth of *Bukhārī Sharīf* have been sifted in the same way. The authentic Ahādīth were accepted and the weak ones were left out.

These are just three lines from 46 lines of poetry. From this we can gauge their attachment to *Bukhārī Sharīf*, and the attention they gave to its *khatam*. This was practised in Gujarat.

Attention to *khatam* of *Bukhārī* in Punjab

The *khatam* of *Bukhārī* was also made in Punjab. During the era of Akbarī, there was a pious elder by the name of Muftī Muhammad. He held the position of muftī in Lahore. The following is said with regard to him: "He held a *khatam* for *Bukhārī Sharīf* and *Mishkāt Sharīf*, and had a huge gathering for it." In addition to this: "He had prepared *halwā* (a sweet dish) and humbled the *'ulamā'* and *sulahā'* (righteous servants) with it."

The above concerns the *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* in Punjab. In this way, we provided three proofs. We learn from this that the programme of *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* which we started is not something

new. It is in practice among our *ʿulamā’* and pious elders for the last 450 years.

The other point is that the *duʿā* which is made at the time of *khatam* is most certainly accepted – *inshā Allāh*. This is the unanimous opinion of our *ʿulamā’*. Whenever any calamity befell the *ummah*, our pious elders would make a *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* and make *duʿā* thereafter. When the Tartars attacked, they reduced the Islamic lands to bits. They destroyed Baghdad brick by brick. Libraries were burnt. Books were cast into the Tigris River causing its water to turn black. It seemed as though there will be no Islamic region in the Islamic world. Khurāsān was destroyed. All the nearby regions were ravaged. The Tartar army advanced like a flood water. When this army advanced towards Syria, a large group of senior *ʿulamā’* began the *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf*.

Maulānā Manāzir Hasan Gīlānī *rahimahullāh* writes: "They had not completed the *khatam* as yet when ʿAllāmah Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd entered the musjid and gave them the good news of the defeat of the Tartar army.

The *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* used to take place during dangerous situations. I have seen our elders of Sahāranpūr and Deoband giving particular attention to the *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf*. When Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* used to make the *khatam*, people from Assam, Kashmir, Kanyakumari, Madras, Kaudinar and various other places would come so that they could join Hadrat's

duʿā’. The scene of the *duʿā’* at Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband was most unique, and I can still picture it to this day how people used to supplicate to and beseech Allāh *taʿālā*.

Today a practising *ʿālim*, erudite researcher, and reformer will be conducting the *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf*. During this blessed time, you must focus your attention towards Allāh *taʿālā*, and make *duʿā’* for your self, your relatives, for the betterment of the entire *ummah*, and for the success of all humanity. *Inshā Allāh*, your presence will be most beneficial. An assembly of the *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* is no ordinary assembly; it is a most valuable assembly.

Although *Bukhārī Sharīf* and other Hadīth collections are taught in our *madāris*, it is sad to say that our students do not remain as attached to these books as they ought to. If 100 students were to qualify from our *madāris* and we were to ask them after five years if they ever opened *Tirmidhī Sharīf*, you will probably get only five who would respond in the positive.

The advice of Maulānā Badr-e-ʿĀlam *rahimahullāh*

I presented my self before Hadrat Maulānā Badr-e-ʿĀlam Sāhib Meerutī *rahimahullāh* in Madīnah Munawwarah. This was probably in 1959. Hadrat asked me: "What do you do?" I replied: "I am in Jāmiʿah Dhābel." Hadrat gave me a few words of advice. He said:

Just as you read the Qur'ān daily, you must read a few Ahādīth daily. Tomorrow you must go an buy *Tajrīd Bukhārī* and read it every day. You will benefit in two ways: (1) You will get the reward of reading the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. (2) The narrations of *Bukhārī Sharīf* will remain in your mind, and this will aid you when you need. You will know where to find a particular Hadīth of *Bukhārī Sharīf*.

The other advice which he gave was to send *durūd* (salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in abundance. He said to me: "Look! We had debates against those who hold Barelwī beliefs. They wrote books against us, our *'ulamā'* provided answers to them. We went to such limits in refuting them that we could not even read 100 times *durūd*." Hadrat said with much grief: "This is not right. As for their fanaticism, that is another matter."

May Allāh *ta'ālā* reward Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth [Maulānā Zakarīyyā] Sāhib *rahimahullāh* for having conveyed *The Virtues of Durūd Sharīf* to countless homes. His forty *durūd* is also read in many *masājid.*

Another important point to bear in mind is that there is a decrease in propagational mind-set in our institutes. This is a sorrowful situation. The reason for this is that we only read books, but are not attached and connected to our pious elders as much as we ought to. We neither read their books nor do we establish a link of *bay'ah* and rectification with our elders. It is most essential for every student to

establish a reformational bond with a pious servant of Allāh *taʿālā.*

A point made my Manāzir Hasan Gīlānī

The points made by Hadrat Maulānā Manāzir Hasan Gīlānī *rahimahullāh* really appeal to me. As regards the following verses:

كَلَّآ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَيَطْغٰى، أَنْ رَّءَاهُ اسْتَغْنٰى، إِنَّ إِلٰى رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعٰى

No such thing! Man transgresses from this that he considers himself to be self-sufficient. Surely to Your Sustainer is your return.[1]

The commentators says that they were revealed with reference to Abū Jahal. Maulānā Manāzir Hasan Gīlānī *rahimahullāh* picks up a point from here by saying that a peculiar trait of knowledge is that when a person rises slightly with knowledge, it gives rise to rebellion in him. He begins to consider himself to be independent of all. He reads a few books and feels he does not need anyone. Whereas this quality was not found in our elders. Hakīmul Ummat Hadrat Maulānā Ashraf ʿAlī Thānwī Sāhib *rahimahullāh* never issued a *fatwā* without first having Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* to peruse through it. Hadrat Thānwī's *rahimahullāh* prominence, intellectual acumen and erudition were of such a level that there was no need for him to do this, [yet he did it]. But today, it is difficult for us to

[1] Sūrah al-ʿAlaq, 96: 6-8.

do this. We will study a course for one year, and never ask anyone thereafter.

So Maulānā Manāzir Hasan Gīlānī *rahimahullāh* derived this point from the verse: "he considers himself to be self-sufficient" that when man gains knowledge, he considers himself independent of all. The treatment for such thoughts is: "Surely to your Sustainer is your return." In other words, a person must turn to Allāh *taʿālā*. This will only happen if we go to the *Ahlullāh* (the pious servants of Allāh *taʿālā*) and establish a bond with them. We will not be able to acquire these good traits without bonding with them. We must always remember the following simple couplet of Hakīm Akhtar Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum*:

> This is the only way to reach Him [Allāh *taʿālā*], that is, you must create a way to those [*Ahlullāh*] who have reached Him.

Create a bond with the *Ahlullāh*. As long as the heart is not purified, there will be no light in your knowledge, and it will not be effective.

Maintain a special bond with the *sīrah*

Another important point is that our attention to the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* has decreased. I went to South Africa recently and met Professor Salmān Nadwī Sāhib in Durban. He said to me: "It is extremely sad to say that let alone the Muslim masses paying no attention to the biography of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, even our scholars and *ʿulamā'* are not paying attention to it."

There is a need to study the *sīrah* from all angles. We also have to observe the Ahādīth in a manner whereby we get guidance from it for our present day situations. ʿAllāmah Yūsuf Qardāwī *hafizahullāh* has written a book titled, *as-Sunnah Masdar lil Hadārah* (the Sunnah, the basis for civilization). In it he draws our attention to the different issues which face us today, and the treatment and solution which is provided for those issues in the light of Ahādīth.

When we teach Hadīth to students, we go into many details and discussions in the beginning. But towards the end [of the academic year], we leave out even the essential points, and do not even cast a gaze on present day issues.

Not very long ago, I was reading Hadrat's [Maulānā Taqī ʿUthmānī] booklet, *Āp dars-e-Nizāmī kis tarah parhā'e?* (How should you teach the *dars-e-Nizāmī?*). The thought came to my mind that we should request Hadrat to give us guidelines on how to teach Hadīth, and he should write an article on this subject. If he does this, we will be really indebted to him.

May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this assembly, may He make you servants of this *Dīn*, and may He give progress to this *madrasah* and all other *Dīnī* institutes. Āmīn.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ‘ULAMĀ’

Talk delivered on 29 April 2006

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين.

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم، بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِيْنَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ وَالَّذِيْنَ لاَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ﴾ وقال تعالى ﴿وَاعْتَصِمُوْا بِحَبْلِ اللهِ جَمِيْعًا وَّلاَ تَفَرَّقُوْا وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَةَ اللهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

The importance of *makātib* and *madāris*

Respected *‘ulamā’* and my dear friends! We have assembled for a particular purpose. We have to lay the foundation for a building of Jāmi‘ah Riyā<u>d</u> al-‘Ulūm, Leicester. Respected friends! Our elders made efforts to open *madāris* throughout the world because these *makātib* and *madāris* are the forts of *Dīn* from which genuine *‘ulamā’* are produced. Our elders thought about all these things. We will have to lead our lives as they did if we want to produce individuals like them. We have hope in Allāh *ta‘ālā* we will be able to protect His *Dīn*.

The responsibility of *ʿulamā’*

Some lines of ʿAllāmah Iqbāl were rendered just now. He mentions therein that the Muslims had a powerful government in Spain which extended for a period of 700 years. But the responsibility of training and educating the masses was not carried out by the *ʿulamā’*. Consequently, a 700 year rule was completely wiped out of existence. Today, just a few remnants and relics of this mighty nation remain in that country. I went to visit the al-Hamrā’ Fort about two years ago. When I entered one of the special chambers, I noticed that the last ruler of this government had written on every part of the wall: *Lā ghāliba illallāh* (none but Allāh can overpower). On reading this, tears welled in my eyes. We saw a musjid in Qurtubah which was converted to a church. What a magnificent and huge musjid, yet its walls are filled with pictures of the cross.

My dear friends! When we read history, travel through the world and see all these different conditions, then our heart cries out and says: This is the result of the heedlessness of those on whose shoulders the responsibility of guiding the *ummah* was placed. When the *ʿulamā’* – whom Allāh *taʿālā* blessed with knowledge of the Qur’ān and Hadīth – shift away from their purpose and become engrossed in the world, then the *ummah* is destroyed.

The role of evil *ʿulamā’* in the deviation of Akbar

You must have read in the history of India that Akbar was an absolutely ignorant person. In the beginning, he held the *ʿulamā’* in high esteem. He

would invite *'ulamā'* to his court, seat them, and seek their counsel because he was not educated. But then he saw the *'ulamā'* immersed in disputes. One *'ālim* complaining about the other, the other complaining about another, one saying one thing, another saying something else, and so on. When this increased gradually, he lost confidence in the *'ulamā'*. And you always find people waiting for an ideal opportunity. When they saw the king losing confidence in the *'ulamā'*, they began putting certain ideas in his mind. They said: Islam is now 1 000 years old, and no religion continues beyond a thousand years. There is a need to initiate a new religion in India. These *mullās* (*'ulamā'*) who are fighting with each other must be cast aside.

These ideas were put in his mind. Some modernists were in and around there, and they took advantage of the situation. As Maulānā said just now, when there are differences and disputes in our ranks, others will certainly take advantage. This caused severe damage to Islam, and the history of India changed. He [Akbar] coined a new religion by the name of Dīn-e-Ilāhī. Restrictions were imposed on the slaughtering of cows and many Hindu customs were admitted into the royal court.

The condition of evil *'ulamā'*

My dear friends! Historians write, and you can even refer to *Tārīkh Da'wat wa 'Azīmat* of Hadrat Maulānā Sayyid Abul Hasan 'Alī Miyā Nadwī *rahimahullāh*. He delves into this issue and describes the achievements of Hadrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rahimahullāh* in this regard. He writes that Akbar

was so adversely harmed by evil *ʿulamā'* that the situation of the country changed. The danger of Islam coming to an end in India was perceived. This was the consequence of disunity among the *ʿulamā'*. They did not understand the demands of their time, followed their vain desires, and were habituated to accumulating worldly riches. H̲ad̲rat Maulānā writes that in each *ʿālim's* house there were heaps and boxes of money. They had just one goal in mind, how to accumulate as much wealth as possible.

Those *ʿulamā'* who say or do things for the sake of money have proved to be the most dangerous for the *ummah*. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us.

The achievements of our elders

My dear brothers! Our pious elders always tried to change the wheels of time, and gave immense sacrifices for it.

When the British took control of this country [India] in 1857 A.H., they caused such havoc and mayhem that thousands of *ʿulamā'* were crucified and *madāris* shut down. The Persian language was banned, and anyone seen with a beard was either imprisoned or crucified. An air of despondency and sorrow prevailed. Our elders turned to Allāh *taʿālā*, and the foundations for Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband and Maz̲āhir al-ʿUlūm were laid. They concluded that there was only one way to stem this tide, and that is to prepare sincere *ʿulamā'*. These *ʿulamā'* must be so sincere that even if hundreds and thousands of rupees are presented to them, they cast them aside. The ordinary rooms of the Dār al-ʿUlūm produced

such *ʿulamā’* who refused the gifts of the wealthy *nawābs*. This is no ordinary feat.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā’s self-sufficiency

My dear friends! You may have read in history books about how self-sufficient our *ʿulamā’* were. That is something else. But we have seen such examples in our very own time and with our very own eyes. Take H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā [Abul H̲asan ʿAlī Nadwī] S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh* as an example. Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed him with unique self-sufficiency. He would repeatedly say: "We have to remain connected with Allāh *taʿālā*. We have nothing to take from these kings."

I was present when Nadwatul ʿUlamā’ held its 50th anniversary *jalsah*. About 100 Arab *ʿulamā’* attended. I do not thing such a large number of such distinguished *ʿulamā’* from the Arab world ever came to India at once. Shaykh ʿAbd ar-Rah̲mān Ah̲mad Pāshā, ʿAbd ar-Rah̲man H̲abankah (known as Barkat Islam), and other erudite *ʿulamā’* of Egypt, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, and Saudi Arabia where all housed in a hotel. One of the meals were arranged and served by the people of Bhopal. So some of our *ʿulamā’* went to join in the meal. Those who were serving the meal were youngsters who did not recognize our *ʿulamā’*, so they moved them aside. These *ʿulamā’* felt insulted, and when they went to their rooms, they began commenting on this incident. They said: ʿAlī Miyā has got his milking cow, so who is going to bother about us now?

Strangely, this statement reached Hadrat Maulānā. He was very hurt by it, and the next day he went onto the stage. The place was filled with people. He addressed everyone in a very painful tone and said: "I am conscious of the fact that Allāh *taʿālā* is present here and watching us, and I am saying this: I did not call these Arab *ʿulamā'* to receive financial assistance from them. I do not have to say this, but I will say it: I am a person who rejected and refused the gifts and bestowals of King Faysal. I have been to the King of Jordan who offered me many material benefits, but I refused them all. I was offered the post of principal and rector of Jāmiʿah Islāmīyyah Madīnah Munawwarah, but I refused and said to them, I have to serve the Muslims of India. I said: Go and cast your net on someone else. I have been educated in India. I have seen my elders. *Inshā Allāh*, I will not be attracted by all these rupees."

The purpose of inviting Arab *ʿulamā'* to India

Hadrat Maulānā added: I actually invited these Arab *ʿulamā'* to present to them the phenomenal contribution of our *ʿulamā'* in the fields of Hadīth, *tafsīr* and literature. The sterling services which can only be rendered by an entire academy was rendered by each one of our *ʿulamā'* while sitting on their straw mats in their tiny rooms. These are the services of our *ʿulamā'* which I want to show to them."

Hadrat Maulānā had prepared large charts which listed the great *mufassirīn*, *muhaddithīn*, writers and litterateurs of India. The Arab *ʿulamā'* were studying all these charts with much interest and were

surprised to learn about the large number of such erudite *mufassirīn, muhaddithīn*, writers and litterateurs. Many of their written works were also on show. The Arab *ʿulamā'* looked at all this and were astonished.

Hadrat Maulānā added: "I really want to show them the services which were rendered by the *ʿulamā'* of our country. As for our *madrasah*, we will still go to the poor Muslims and ask them for four *ānās* (quarter rupee) and run our *madrasah* with their contributions."

The direction in which conditions are heading

My dear friends! This is a remarkable thing which Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* said. He understood the conditions of the world. He used to travel around, he journeyed throughout the Islamic world. He recognized the direction of the wind. At present the world is trying to change the minds and buy off those who are considered to be leaders of nations, who are *ʿālims*, and leaders of parties and organizations.

It is recorded that when the communist revolution took place in 1917, the *ʿulamā'* of Bukhārā and Samarqand were addressed thus: Look! This scourge is approaching. You must think about how to handle it, get rid off your differences, and think about ways to combat it. They did not pay heed and replied: When it does come, we will make *khatam* of *Bukhārī Sharīf* and make *duʿā*. They did not understand that this "red revolution" which was approaching needed some other course of action. Consequently,

thousands of *ʿulamāʾ* were slaughtered. The *masājid* of Samarqand and Bukhārā were coloured with blood. History teaches us that when the *ʿulamāʾ* become heedless, the results are most dangerous both for them and for the *ummah* at large. May Allāh *taʿālā* protect us. Āmīn.

My dear friends! The present conditions are very dangerous. All the powers of the world have joined hands in an effort to divert the *madāris* from their actual objectives, lead them in another direction, and to create ill feeling in the hearts of Muslim masses towards the *ʿulamāʾ*. This process is in operation throughout the world. Within a short while, articles on this subject have been written in different languages. Look at the Gujarati newspapers, look at the English newspapers – and every few days you will find an article which is intended to make the masses feel that these *maulwīs* are out-dated, they will mislead them, and the masses will have to remove this burden from their shoulders.

I have been observing this. A bi-monthly Urdu newspaper is published in Toronto. They have tutored certain writers to write articles which would cause opposition to the *ʿulamāʾ*. They say: What is the need for us to have any contact with people [*ʿulamāʾ*] who do not understand the situation, who do not realize what times we are going through, what changes we need to make, and what our needs are? A Muslim writes: "Whatever Mu<u>h</u>ammad *<u>s</u>allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* did was correct and applicable for his times. But it is not necessary to accept

everything which he says in our times. We will have to accept and embrace what is present in our times." This is what a Muslim is writing. Now where is his *īmān*? This is certainly a call towards atheism and irreligiousness.

How to cause people to rebel against Islam

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh* used to say: In today's times, no one will explicitly say to another that he must leave Islam. Rather, they have resorted to literary books to cause people to rebel against Islam. The person will write literary books in a manner which will cause people to become alienated towards Islam. There are such litterateurs in Egypt and Syria. They were then given the Nobel Prize. Mah̲mūd, a famous Egyptian author, was given the Nobel Prize. He wrote a book titled *Aulād H̲āratunā* (children of our district). They choose captivating titles, and then write in a manner which would cause the reader to turn against Islam. This is why people like him are highly appreciated. Salmān Rushdie is held in high regard, and so is Mah̲mūd and T̲āhā H̲usayn.

Nevertheless, the West has trained such individuals who write against Islam. My dear brothers! Muslim students go to their universities for PhDs. And so, they are intentionally given tasks of this nature. For example, they will ask the student to do research on the errors and mistakes committed by Muh̲ammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī. So the student will search for Imām Bukhārī's mistakes, and prepare a thesis on this subject. You see! This is the type of work which is given to Muslim students, and they are told that if

they do it, they will receive a PhD. A Muslim student was really asked to do this, but he refused. So they said he will not receive a PhD. This happened in this country [England].

My dear friends! We have to understand the direction in which conditions are heading. At present, our *madāris* and *makātib* are their targets. Don't go too far. Just pick up today's *Jang* newspaper and see. I saw it this morning. It had a large advertisement which was more than half a page, about a program which is to be broadcast tonight. They are going to discuss whether there is a need for *makātib* in this country. Are they of benefit or not? This is a multi-cultural country. Will these *makātib* not create a conflict with other cultures? These are the types of questions listed in the advert.

My dear friends! May Allāh *taʿālā* have mercy on us. Our condition is such that we do not even look at the newspapers which are distributed among our people. We do not even try to learn what is being said about us in the world. I was restless the whole morning. I said to Maulānā: "What is happening? A programme of this nature is going to be broadcast tonight." You will see what type of people will be seated, and what discussions they will have. This is an academic conspiracy against us. They aim to mobilize our people against the *madāris* which you and I are running. They will claim that we are backward, whereas there is a need for changes. These are the changes which we need. They will then list whatever is in their minds. My friends! If we remain heedless on such occasions, there can be no

one more unfortunate than us. This heedlessness will drown us, and drown our people as well.

The *'ulamā'* must unite

I was gone to Batley, where Hadrat Maulānā 'Abd ar-Ra'ūf Sāhib and other *'ulamā'* were present. When I enquired from them, I learnt that there are 140 *maktab* teachers in just one city. Imagine, 140 *'ulamā'*! I thought to myself, O Allāh! There are such a large number of *'ulamā'* here. If they join the *'ulamā'* of another city, and prepare a unified policy against this, it will be so beneficial.

I went to Reunion a few days after Ramadān. One of the *masājid* there is 100 years old, so they had a *jalsah*. They invited several French people as well. Some of them were from Algeria, and others were French nationals. A few senior Muslim leaders were also present. Abū Bakr, who was in charge of all French religious affairs, was also present. One of our students, Maulwī Muhammad, is in Reunion. He said to me that he mentioned to them that a few of his teachers from India have also been invited, and he would like us to meet him. He agreed to meet us. Maulwī Muhammad then asked me if he could bring them to meet me. I agreed, because I wanted to learn his views. When they arrived, one turned out to be a French national, and the other was an Algerian. The Algerian spoke good Arabic, but the French person did not know Arabic. So I spoke to him in Urdu, and Maulwī Muhammad would translate into French.

The first question he posed to me was whether we *madrasah* people in India are thinking about

changing the syllabus or not. I first explained to him that there are certain things in our syllabus which do not need to be changed in the least. However, there are certain things which we change depending on the needs and the time. As for the fundamental parts of the syllabus, these we cannot change. We then discussed several other aspects. We spoke about the situation in France. There were some riots at the time, and people in Paris were damaging vehicles. He asked me for my views in this regard. But from his entire conversation, I perceived that his mind is filled about the *madāris* and *makātib*. They are worried about the *'ulamā'*, the *madāris* and the *makātib*; and they are always looking for ways to discredit them.

The propaganda of today

A week before I came here from India, there was an encounter with four Kashmiri youngsters in Ahmadābād. They were shot at about 1:30 in the morning. The police claim that they went to capture them but they attacked them. So they returned fire. A Hindu person said that this is absolutely false. They killed the Kashmiris on purpose. He says that he went into the room and did not find any signs of bullets on the room walls or the curtains. If they shot rounds and, assuming the rounds did not strike them, they ought to have hit the walls or the curtains. But there is no such sign. This shows that the police are lying. This is what a Hindu had to say.

They then searched their belongings and found a few phone numbers of Kashmiri students who were studying in Kharaud, Naraulī and Pārnīrā. The

moment they found these numbers, the police raided those *madāris* and apprehended one student from *Daurah H̲adīth* (the final year of the *ʿālim* course). They claimed that he had contact with the terrorists who were killed, and they used to stay [in the *madrasah*] with him.

I said to some people that when we used to study in Deoband, many visitors from Gujarat used to come to us and stay in our rooms. Now how should we know what their situation is in Gujarat? We merely looked at them as people from our region. The Kashmiri student may have done the same thing. They must have hosted them thinking them to be their own people. But soon thereafter, the Gujarati newspapers had headlines claiming that our *madāris* are centres for terrorists.

They did not confine themselves to this. There is a small village near Bārdaulī by the name of Shukrtalāudī. Maulānā Hāshim S̲āh̲ib has a house where he houses about 130 little children. A few Kashmiri children were also living there. When he heard of the situation [as described above], he sent the children off. It was a small village, but the police reached there as well. They asked: "You had some Kashmiri children here, where are they?" He replied: "We sent them away." The next day the newspapers had an article stating that this small village is an excellent place to hide terrorists. Whereas they had nothing to do with all this. The villagers do not even know who or what terrorists are. But these people continue printing articles of this nature.

They wrote the following about the Kharaud *madrasah*: “A village of terrorists in the Kharaud *madrasah*”. So I said to the authorities of the Kharaud *madrasah* to take them to court and ask them to prove even a single act of terrorism which took place in their village. But our people are so unconcerned that they are not ready to take any legal action. I notice that the *‘ulamā’* get scared over small matters, and tremble. If we cannot bear a little inconvenience, what more can we say?

Anyway, we have to think and wipe out our differences under such conditions. If one person turns his face away from the other, and the latter does the same; one has certain ill-feelings about the other, and the latter has the same; we can never succeed in these conditions.

The need for unity

The situation demands on us to leave our personal opinions, cast aside our differences, and get together on a single platform. We need to ponder over the situation of the *ummah*, think of solutions to this propaganda and their efforts to change our syllabus, and see what single policy we can adopt. My dear friends! These are all essential tasks. Do not be unconcerned for even a single day. I am appealing to you in Allāh’s name, as an insignificant brother and with real pain. For Allāh’s sake, for Allāh’s sake, for Allāh’s sake, do not be so unconcerned, and unite on a single platform.

My dear friends! There is no person in this world who has 100% good qualities. A good person is one

who has more good in him. Every person will most certainly have some bad qualities in him. Just as bad qualities can be in us, they can be in others as well. But it is not right for us to turn away from a person just because we saw a certain bad quality in him. If such a situation exists, we will be defeated, we will cause loss to our own selves, and this will have a detrimental effect on our *Dīn*.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Sayyid Abul H̲asan ʿAlī S̲āh̲ib Nadwī *rah̲imahullāh* had, a very long time ago, said: "You people must not sit back and relax. Do not think that you are here for many years, you were born here, you have many vehicles, you have big bank balances, we wield a lot of influence, and so on. All this is nothing. When nations have differences among themselves and they become rationally weak, then they are wiped out in minutes. Keep a watchful eye on the situation in the world, see in which direction we are heading, what are these people writing and saying about us, and what are their policies. Ponder and reflect over the Qur'ān and H̲adīth and prepare a united policy of your own. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us inspiration." H̲ad̲rat Maulānā *rah̲imahullāh* used to quote this poem with real feeling and emotion before students and *ʿulamā'*: "May Allāh acquaint you with a storm because the waves of your ocean do not have that restlessness."

May Allāh *taʿālā* create a restlessness in our hearts, and may He inspire us to think. We are unconcerned even in these conditions. We are not prepared to sit together and think on the same platform. If you are unable to unite the *ʿulamā'* of the entire country,

you can at least create unity among the *ʿulamā'* of this city of Leicester. I had mentioned this afternoon that you must be grateful to Allāh *taʿālā* you have three Dār al-ʿUlūms in this city. There is this Riyād al-ʿUlūm, Jāmiʿah Islāmīyyah, and Maulānā Ādam Sāhib is running a successful institute. Then you have a *madrasah* for girls. What a great favour of Allāh *taʿālā* in that He inspired us to run three Dār al-ʿUlūms in just one city. So what is there if those of all three Dār al-ʿUlūms get together and think over the situation. We must establish contact with those friends of ours who know English, who are doctors, lawyers, councillors; and constantly enquire from them about the situation in the country. If we have university lecturers, we must establish contacts with them. It is not necessary for every single *ʿālim* to have immediate knowledge of every single issue which crops up in the country. Sometimes the *ʿulamā'* say: "We do not even have time to conduct our classes and lessons, where will we get the time to worry about these other issues?" This is not right.

The practice of Hadrat Rāipūrī

Hadrat Maulānā ʿAbd al-Qādir Sāhib Rāipūrī *rahimahullāh* was a very senior shaykh and teacher of his time. Yet, newspapers would be read before him on a daily basis. I personally saw this in the *khānqāh* of Rāipūr. The *al-Jamʿīyyah* was being read before Hadrat while he was sitting on a bed propped up against a pillow. He was listening to all the news. When Hadrat Maulānā Abul Hasan ʿAlī Miyā Nadwī *rahimahullāh* was about to go to the Arab countries, he went to Rāipūr and said to Hadrat: "Hadrat, I am about to go on a journey. Make *duʿā* for me, Allāh

taʿālā must take some beneficial work from me when I go there.” H̲ad̲rat said: “Maulwī S̲āh̲ib! You must say to those simple-minded people [the Arab leaders] that they must establish factories in their countries. (this is mentioned in Shāh ʿAbd al-Qādir S̲āh̲ib’s diary which is published in Pakistan) Who is saying this? An old man sitting in the *khānqāh* of Rāipūr, regarding whom people think he knows nothing about the world. If any of you have been to Rāipūr, you will know in what a remote place the *khānqāh* was. H̲ad̲rat’s *khānqāh* was in an orchard. We used to take a bus from Sahāranpūr, get off at a particular stop, then walk along a river, and eventually reach the Rāipūr *khānqāh*. Now here is a person sitting in the jungle of Rāipūr, yet he is aware of the Arab situation and concerned about it. He was saying this 50-55 years ago: “Say to those simple-minded people that they must establish factories in their countries.” They sold petrol, and are importing all manufactured goods from America. So America can now “pinch their noses” whenever it likes. H̲ad̲rat knew very well what was going to happen to the Arabs.

I also saw this practice of H̲ad̲rat Madanī *rah̲imahullāh*. All our elders used to conduct lessons during the day, and wake up at night to cry before Allāh *taʿālā*, and they used to sob before Him. H̲ad̲rat Madanī *rah̲imahullāh* attended a *jalsah* in Kausārī. The *jalsah* ended at one o’ clock in the morning with a *duʿā*. I saw H̲ad̲rat Madanī *rah̲imahullāh* at three o’ clock sitting on his *mus̲allā* (prayer mat) and sobbing before Allāh *taʿālā*. For who was he crying? My friends! May Allāh *taʿālā* give

us understanding. We must ponder over where we are, and where our pious elders were.

I am making a humble appeal to you. The *ʿulamā'* here must assemble as quickly as possible so that they can ponder over these issues. If, for whatever reason, anyone has ill-feeling towards another, he must cast it aside and think over the issue out of mercy for this *ummah*. On this journey of mine I had decided I will not deliver any talk anywhere. I even told Maulānā Ismāʿīl not to arrange any programme for me. I said: Many talks and lectures are delivered in the world. There is no shortage of *ʿulamā'*. The best speakers and orators come to your country, and many programmes are organized. But we do not see any effect of these talks.

Keep a vigilant eye on the media

I had come to this country a few years ago, and wherever I went, I said to my friends to appoint one or two *ʿālims* who monitor the media. They must read whatever is printed, and mark off any article which has anything against Islam. They must do this every day. My dear brothers! If we are not aware of the conditions and situations, how will we defend ourselves? It does not make sense – how can I repulse something if I have no knowledge about it?

The achievement of Mujaddid Alf Thānī

When H̲ad̲rat Mujaddid Alf Thānī *rah̲imahullāh* had insight about the conditions in this country [India], he turned the tide of history through his *maktūbāt* (writings). When he realized that the situation in the country was very bad, with *kufr* and apostasy

spreading everywhere, he used all his energies to change the situation through his *maktūbāt* in his Persian language. If you were to read them in the original Persian, you will certainly feel the effects. *Allāhu akbar*! The Persian language is so powerful that it can stupefy a person. He wrote letters to powerful leaders, *'ulamā'* and businesspeople; and tried to change their minds. At the same time, he continued crying before Allāh *ta'ālā*. Consequently, the situation changed, and a person like Aurangzeb *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* became the new king. This was the fruit of <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Mujaddid's *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* efforts.

<u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* says that historians were confounded as to what happened in India. Akbar initiated his Dīn Ilāhī after so much of efforts. This was followed by King Jahāngīr and then 'Ālamgīr [Aurangzeb]. The situation of the country changed altogether, and there was an interest in Islam. What ought to have happened was for the situation to get worse. This is because nations move more speedily towards retrogression. But they did not know that the efforts of a fakir sitting in one corner in Sirhind changed the direction of the country. When 'Allāmah Iqbāl *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* went to the grave of <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Mujaddid *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*, he said this couplet: "Here in Sirhind is the guard of the treasures of the *ummah*."

We do not even know what efforts <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Mujaddid <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib he made. Our elders left everything aside, and devoted themselves to ensuring this *Dīn* remains alive in its original and correct form.

Our responsibility

It is our responsibility to keep Islam alive in its original form as conveyed to us by Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam and practically demonstrated to us by the S̲ah̲ābah rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum. We have to do this no matter what criticism we receive, even if they refer to us as the backward class, as people of ancient times, and people who love retrogression. Do not say anything to them. We must accept all the criticism and constantly repeat the teachings of Islam. We must make our people realize that the true religion is what was brought by Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, and we cannot accept any changes to it. This is irrespective of whether we receive the material benefits of this world or not.

My dear brothers! My biggest appeal to you today is for you to assemble somewhere, and come to a unanimous decision about how you are going to handle these situations and conditions. Meetings are already being held, *ʿulamā'* are being summoned and questioned about what changes they can make in their *maktabs*. When I reached London, I read a full page article written by some Siddīqī S̲āh̲ib. He claims that there are 1 000 *maktabs* here, children are treated harshly, they are beaten, they are sexually abused, and so on. This is what he wrote in the *Jang* newspaper. This article appeared in this month of April, some of you may have read it.

I thought to myself: what attitude are they trying to develop with regard to our *madāris*? If we do not read such articles and do not show concern about

them, can there be anyone more negligent than us? May Allāh *taʿālā* give us inspiration.

My dear friends! Allāh *taʿālā* has afforded us the opportunity. We have *madāris,* libraries, thinkers, and *ʿulamā'* who know the English language. We should at least come together and think over these issues, and come up with a unanimous work plan.

We must take stock of our selves

If there is any weakness in our *madrasah*, we must try to remedy it. I met a person a few days ago who said to me that he went to a certain *madrasah* where the toilets were very dirty and the drains were damaged. So I said to my friends: If this is really the case, we must put it right. We must realize that we are running a *madrasah* in England and not in India. You can run a *madrasah* as you like in India, and it will be okay. We house up to eight children in a single room. But you cannot do this here. We have to see in which country we are living, what type of culture the people have, what level of cleanliness they expect, and how they view our institutions.

Cleanliness is essential

A delegation of the Islamic Development Bank from Jeddah came to Mumbai on one occasion. While they were travelling from Mumbai, they said to one of my lawyer friends who resides in Mumbai that they would like to visit one of the Islamic institutes there. So my friend phoned me and said that he would like to bring them to Tadkeshwar. I replied: "The *madrasah* is closed at the moment because of holidays, but you may still bring them." I left my

village, Kāpaudrā, by car and proceeded to Tadkeshwar. I waited for them, and they eventually arrived close to *ʿas̲r* time. They walked around and had a look at the *madrasah*. They were all educated people. Some of them were from Indonesia, some from Jeddah, and one from Algeria, by the name of ʿAlī S̲āh̲ib. He was a very intelligent and sharp person. He said to me: "O Shaykh! I need to go to the toilet." I assumed he wanted to relieve himself, so I took him to our guest house and said: "You may proceed inside." He said: "No. I want to go to the toilets which are used by the students." I was a bit lost, and thought to myself: "Does he need to relieve himself or does he have some other agenda?"

Nevertheless, I took him to the students' toilets. Because it was holiday time, the toilets were locked. I got them opened. I was very particular about having the toilets cleaned twice a day, and there must be no marks on the toilet pans. And so, I showed him all the toilets without hesitation. When he came out, he said: "There is no need for me to see any of the other places. If your toilets are clean, all the other places will be clean."

As I was saying, they look at our institutes, they observe what work we do. Not all of them know nothing about us. Some of them are experienced, some of them have lived in a university environment. They will merely pass by and be able to gauge our institutes.

Do not be carried away by British culture

Hadrat Maulānā Saʿīd Sāhib Rānderī *rahimahullāh* came to Tadkeshwar on one occasion. English was not included in any syllabus of our Gujarat *madāris*, but we [in Tadkeshwar] introduced it. Some of our *ʿulamā'* had made objections and said that we are introducing something new in the *madrasah*.

Anyway, Hadrat Maulānā arrived, and he stood outside the classrooms and was observing the students with a watchful gaze. I thought to myself, I do not know what Maulānā is looking at. He went pass one classroom, then the next, then another, and another. Then when he came upstairs into my office, he himself said: "Maulwī Sāhib! I stood by each classroom and was examining the students closely. You must have thought to yourself and wondered what I was looking for." I replied: "Hadrat, the thought certainly passed my mind." He said: "I was checking whether the English language which you introduced here is having any effect on the students or not. I was checking if English culture was coming into them. I was looking at their haircuts to see if any of them had English style haircuts. *Al-hamdulillāh*, I did not see any such student."

He added: "You may continue teaching them English, teach them the language but do not allow English culture to come into them." Such was the insight of our pious elders. They kept a vigilant eye on everything. You may study English but do not allow English culture to come anywhere near you. Adopt what is good, and cast aside what is bad.

Apostasy is spreading through literature

An Arab in America wrote a book titled, *Mashākil aṯ-Ṯalabatil Muslimīn fī al-maghrib* (challenges faced by Muslim students in the West). He writes that children from good religious families take admission in the American universities and their minds change completely. He provides several causes for this. One of the reasons he gives is the presence of centres for teaching the English language. Their syllabus is formulated in such a manner that a person becomes inclined to the crooked path.

For example, when a student commences his studies, a story of two children is read to him. One is a boy and the other is a girl. They would study together in school, go out to a garden to play, they would sit together on a bench, they ate such and such things, and so on. This is not just a story. Rather, it is guiding the reader to also go out with a girl. This is their plot.

As I had said, Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say that apostasy is being spread through literature. Apostasy is spreading in the world through novels. We should also have a look at the books which are being printed, and see what they are printing. What is the nature of the lessons which our children are learning in school? If we are not vigilant in this regard, this poison will spread in our homes and our children will slip out of our hands.

An *ʿālim* cannot remain heedless

My dear friends! A Muslim, an *ʿālim* cannot remain heedless. He has come into this world to carry out the responsibility of a guard. If the guard falls asleep, the nation will be destroyed. My dear friends! A guard cannot fall asleep. For Allāh's sake, keep a watchful eye on the conditions, and read the newspapers so that we know what is happening in the world, and what we should do about it. As for all other trivial differences, cast them aside. Come onto one platform for the sake of the *ummah*, and decide on a suitable response. If someone comes to my *madrasah*, this is the answer I will give. If someone comes to your *madrasah*, you must give the same answer. Everyone must give the same answer. When the answer of everyone is the same, they will realize the correct facts. And if there really are certain weaknesses in us, we must rectify them. We must also discuss these matters, see where we are erring, and what shortcomings there are in the education and tutoring of our children.

The need for dialogue

Dialogues take place everywhere. They also take place in the Arab countries. The Europeans have laid down certain principles for the protection of children. We have to make them understand the extent of freedom which we permit, and what we cannot permit. We must sit with their teachers and educators and engage them in a dialogue. Show to them the effects it will have on society if we were to leave our children absolutely free. We must awaken them so that they do not look at a single angle alone.

Inform them that such a policy will be detrimental to the country. We should not say it will harm us, or harm the Muslim community. My dear friends! This is necessary. It is our duty to direct them as well. It is our obligation to inform them of the harms it will cause to society at large if these evils are allowed to continue. We have not come to this country merely to live in it. We have not come here solely to take something from it. We have certain principles and views. We have an excellent religion and a unique system of morality. We must convey benefit to the nations of the world through our system of morality. We must present the moral teachings to them on different occasions. All this is necessary. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us.

My dear friends! I am unwell, and I am certainly not qualified to address scholars like you. But H̲ad̲rat insisted I say a few words. When respectable *ʿulamāʾ* are present, we can sit and exchange thoughts. So this is just a reminder.

وَذَكِّرْ فَإِنَّ الذِّكْرٰى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

"And remind [each other], surely reminding benefits the believers."

So this is an exchange of ideas, and these thoughts have emanated from the depths of my heart. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable your hearts to accept what I said, may you think over the issue as soon as possible, and may you come up with a course of action and a programme which would ensure the protection of

our *makātib* and *madāris.* May Allāh *taʿālā* give us the inspiration and courage to do this.

The power of a cry of an *ʿālim*

My dear brothers! There are times when the cry of an *ʿālim* saves nations. A law was passed in U.P. (a state of India) that when a child goes to school, he or she must bow before Sarsautī Dewī (an idol). Hindus consider this idol to be the goddess of education. Nevertheless, this law was about to be passed that images of Sarsautī Dewī will have to be pasted and placed in schools. And children entering the school will first have to bow before her so that he or she is blessed with knowledge. Some ministers were thinking along these lines.

When Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* came to know of this, he delivered a speech immediately. He said: "I would like to say frankly to the Muslims that it is *shirk* (polytheism) to bow before any idol. Muslims cannot accept this under any circumstances. If it is made a compulsory law, I will say to the Muslims to remove their children from these schools. We prefer living without worldly knowledge, but we cannot live in polytheism."

So Hadrat Maulānā delivered a powerful speech on this subject. He said: "Even when it came to the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām,* the most concern which they had about their children was the concern of *tawhīd.* Hadrat Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām* called his sons and asked:

مَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِيْ، قَالُوْا نَعْبُدُ إِلٰهَكَ وَإِلٰهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيْلَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ إِلٰهًا وَّاحِدًا

"What are you going to worship after me? They replied: We will worship your God, and the God of your forefathers – Ibrāhīm and Ismāʿīl – one God alone."

Hadrat Yaʿqūb *ʿalayhis salām* felt assured when he heard this. Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* said: The Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām* were concerned about their children although they were living in the same house.

So we have to be concerned about the *tawhīd* of our children. What is the extent of attachment of our children to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*? We have to be worried about this. If there is any weakness in our children's attachment to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, then all the things of this world are worthless. Whether you get a lot of wealth or not, many pounds or not, etc. do not bother about it. Rather worry about strengthening the *tawhīd* of your children and strengthening his attachment to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. If we have these two things, then we will be successful – *inshā Allāh*. If we are negligent in this regard, it will be a severe loss to us. May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us all.

STRAIGHT-TALKING TO STUDENTS OF *DĪN*

Talk delivered in Dār al-ʿUlūm London, Cant, on 4th October 2003

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه أجمعين، إلى يوم الدين، أما بعد.

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ﴿إِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ، خَلَقَ الإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ﴾ صدق الله العظيم.

The peculiar trait of man

My respected teachers and dear brothers! I am most pleased at Allāh *taʿālā* affording me another opportunity to meet you. May Allāh *taʿālā* accept this meeting of ours. Allāh *taʿālā* created man and placed within him a capability which no other creation has. If he strives on this capability, he will learn many things which he did not know before. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

عَلَّمَ الإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

"He taught man what he does not know."

If a person were to take a goat and repeat a scale of *s̠arf* (etymology) from morning to evening before it, it will not make any difference to it – it will not learn anything. Or take a ruling of *fiqh* and repeat it before any other animal – it will not understand anything. But a small child will memorize the scale and the ruling of *fiqh*. The child will repeat to you what he learnt yesterday. An intelligent student can understand an issue the first time it is explained to him. An average student will understand it after two times. If a student is weak, it will have to be repeated to him three times. Some students will understand a lesson when it is explained to them on the board. Whatever the case may be, they will certainly understand. This is the ability which Allāh *taʿālā* gave to man. If he does not understand a particular thing, he ponders over it and applies his mind, and then understands it. This is man's greatest asset.

Knowledge is rebellious by nature

At the same time, a strange thing happens to man. When he learns something, he is overtaken by haughtiness and he considers himself to be great. When people acquire a little knowledge, they start talking as though they know too much.

Nevertheless, our pious elders say that knowledge elevates a person from the pits to the peak. H̠ad̠rat Maulānā Manāz̠ir Ah̠san Gīlānī *rah̠imahullāh* has extracted astonishing points from the verse:

إِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ

"Read in the name of your Rabb." (Sūrah al-ʿAlaq, 96: 6-7)

He says that this verse orders us to read [and study]. But the reading and studying must be done in the name of Allāh *taʿālā*. We learn from this that the sciences which are learnt in Allāh's name are blessed, while those which are learnt without His name have no blessings. The latter will convey a person towards deviation. When man studies in Allāh's name and in accordance with His laws, he treads the straight path. Whereas all the sciences taught in the universities without Allāh's name are actually preparing the means for man's destruction. This is because Allāh's name is not included in them. Allāh *taʿālā* says further on:

كَلاَّ إِنَّ الإِنْسَانَ لَيَطْغَى أَن رَّآهُ اسْتَغْنَى

"No such thing! Man transgresses from this that he considers himself to be self-sufficient." (Sūrah al-ʿAlaq, 96: 6-7)

Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* makes another point. When man studies and acquires knowledge, he considers himself to be independent and unconcerned. He feels he has acquired knowledge, and now he has no need for teachers and the *madrasah*. So transgression comes into him. Although these verses were revealed in reference to Abū Jahal, Hadrat Maulānā *rahimahullāh* extracts

some unique points. He says that when man acquires knowledge and considers himself to be independent, transgression comes into him and he becomes rebellious. Knowledge causes him to be rebellious. He considers himself superior to others. He feels he is not in need of others. He feels: I have a lot of knowledge, I study so much, so what is the need for me to go to others? But such thoughts are very dangerous and harmful to man.

The need for companionship with knowledge

This is why it was the practice of our past elders to accompany knowledge with maintaining contact with the *Ahlullāh*.

إِنَّ إِلَى رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَى

"You certainly have to return to your Rabb."

To ensure that one's return to Allāh *taʿālā* is good, it is necessary to remain in the company of the *Ahlullāh* (the people of Allāh). Once you establish a bond with them, you will be able to control your knowledge. If not, you will not be able to control it. It is necessary to study the different sciences. But together with this, rectification of the heart and nurturing the mind are also essential. If we fill our brains with knowledge and keep our heart empty of rectification, it will be detrimental to us.

When we see differences and disputes among *ʿulamā'* – where they are not prepared to meet each other – the only reason for it is the presence of transgression on account of knowledge. If a person

possesses the qualities of humility and servitude, all these disputes will end. It was the practice of our pious elders not to consider themselves worthy of anything despite possessing so much of knowledge. Instead, they considered themselves in need of knowledge. We have to acquire more knowledge, we have to respect our teachers, we have to go and meet our teachers. These were the qualities in our pious elders. This resulted in effulgence and blessings in their knowledge.

My dear brothers! No person is perfect. Perfection is only for the Prophets *ʿalayhimus salām*. Allāh *taʿālā* elevated them to high ranks of knowledge, and then they were *maʿsūm* (divinely protected). So they did not err. Apart from them, it is possible for every person to err. Even great *imāms* erred in certain opinions, and they would retract from their opinions.

Acknowledge your mistake

When Hadrat Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* used to be in Makkah Muʿazzamah, he had certain views. When he went to Egypt and witnessed the situation there, his views changed. This is why you will see in the books Imām Shāfiʿī *rahimahullāh* having *al-qaul al-awwal* (first opinion), and *al-qaul ath-thānī* (second opinion). This shows that even very great and senior *imāms* would assess the situations and change their views. There was no dogmatism in them. Imām Ahmad *rahimahullāh* and Imām Abū Hanīfah *rahimahullāh* would also retract from some of their opinions. The *ʿulamā'* of our era also adopted the same practice. Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* was such a powerful scholar and a *mujaddid* (reviver) of

his time. He had an entire system called *tarjīh ar-rājih* (giving preference to the preferred opinion). There were times when some of his works would be printed, and these would be read by erudite *ʿulamā’* of the time. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* would occasionally receive letters informing him: Hadrat, you said this, but the preferred opinion in this regard is different from what you said. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* would investigate and research the issue, and when he established that what he was told is correct, he would clearly state in the next month's periodical [which he used to publish]: "We had published this *mas'alah* in this way and we had written such and such thing about it. We received a letter from such and such *ʿālim* and we realized our error. The *ʿālim's* opinion is correct. I therefore retract from my original opinion." This was the system of *tarjīh ar-rājih* which Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* had. We learn from this that even after being an *ʿālim*, a person must keep himself humble. We witness unique conditions of our pious elders. May Allāh *taʿālā* fill their graves with *nūr* (light and effulgence).

Hadrat Gangohī's desire for the truth

There was a group of *ʿulamā’* in India who differed with the views Hadrat Maulānā Rashīd Ahmad Gangohī *rahimahullāh* and Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh*. This group of *ʿulamā’* adopted a very harsh approach on certain issues, and wrote cruel articles against these personalities. They adopted absolute gutter language and many vulgar words in their articles. They used to write very harsh words against our *ʿulamā’*.

Hadrat Maulānā Muhammad Yahyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* who was the father of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth [Maulānā Muhammad Zakarīyyā Sāhib] *rahimahullāh* was the special attendant of Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh.* Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* asked him one day: "Maulwī Yahyā Sāhib! Many days have passed and our friends did not write anything!? It has been quite some time since you read their letters to me. Has nothing come from them?" Hadrat Maulānā Yahyā Sāhib *rahimahullāh* replied: "Hadrat, several articles have arrived. But they resorted to such vulgar words that I cannot read them to you. This is why I did not show them to you."

Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh* then made a statement which is worth pondering over. He said: "No, Maulwī Yahyā Sāhib. You must read to me whatever they write. It may well be that they are correct in what they are writing, and we may be wrong in our views. If such is the case, we will retract." True *'ulamā'* do not reply to vulgar language with vulgar language, but with proofs.

Imām Ahmad practises on *'azīmat*

As regards the issue of *khalq al-Qur'ān* (the created nature of the Qur'ān), Imām Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullāh* used to say to all his opponents:

إيتوني بشيء من كتاب الله وسنة رسوله فأقول به

"Bring to me something from the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger so that I may also hold the same view."

In other words, why are you imposing on me [to accept your view]. Bring me a proof from the Qur'ān and Sunnah of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and I will retract from my opinion. I do not know anything else. I do not want to involve myself in any dissimulation. I do not want to resort to stratagems, point to my fingers and say:

الإنجيل والتورات والزبور والقرآن هذه الأربعة مخلوقة

"The Injīl, Taurāh, Zabūr and Noble Qur'ān – these four – are created."

Some *'ulamā'* pointed to their [four] fingers and said that these four are created. They said to Imām Ah̲mad ibn H̲ambal *rah̲imahullāh*: "You must also point to your fingers and say: 'These four fingers are created.'" He replied: "No. I will speak in explicit terms. The Qur'ān is the speech of Allāh, it is not created. I will say it no matter what happens to me. Yes, if anyone provides proof to the contrary from the Qur'ān and H̲adīth, I will accept it."

Our students' weakness

My dear friends! I mentioned these things to you because – *mashā Allāh* – our *Dīnī* institutions have a considerable number of students. I am connected to

madāris for approximately fifty years. And I am noticing that the qualities which were found in our pious elders – such as humility, amiability, considering yourself to be lower, considering yourself to be always in need of your teachers – have decreased in our students.

The need for *muṯālaʿah* after qualifying

I am therefore saying this very frankly. For Allāh's sake! After studying a few books, or studying for 5-8 years, do not consider yourself to be an *ʿālim*. I am saying this in most clear terms. Knowledge is a very wide ocean which cannot be crossed with eight years of study. The sole purpose of the *Dars-e-Niẕāmī* which is in our *madāris* is for us to make us capable of understanding and solving the books which have been written by our elders. The door of knowledge only opens thereafter. And that too, when a person is regular with *muṯālaʿah* (reading and studying). This is what our elders write in the *sanad* (qualification certificate):

إِنِ اسْتَمَرَّ عَلَى الْمُطَالَعَةِ

"If this student is regular and punctual on muṯālaʿah."

If he is regular and punctual on *muṯālaʿah*, we have hope he will be able to serve *Dīn* properly.

But if we wrote the exams for *Bukhārī Sharīf, Muslim Sharīf, Tirmidhī Sharīf, Hidāyah Awwalayn*, etc. and then returned these books to the *madrasah* library, and never touched these books again, how will the

doors of knowledge open to us? I questioned many boys in India: "How many years have passed since you qualified?" Some of them replied: "Ten years." I asked: "In these ten years, how many times did you open *Abū Dā'ūd Sharīf*?" He replied: "Not even once."

I ask you to take a survey for yourself, and you will find the majority of them like this. Akbar Ilāhābādī *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* used to say: "Do not check the statistics alone. Intermingle with people and see what is living [in them] and what is dying."

If we confine ourselves to statistics and say: There are fifteen Dār al-'Ulūms in Gujarat, from which this number of students have qualified, so many qualified from Kanthāriyā, so many qualified from Tadkeshwar, so many qualified from Rānder, and so many qualified from Dhābel; then this would appear to be a very large number. But how many students are worthy of rendering some service? That is what you must look at.

A valuable word of advice from <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Maulānā Badr-e-'Ālam <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib

When I went to Madīnah Munawwarah, I went to meet <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Maulānā Badr-e-'Ālam <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh*. He asked me: "Maulwī <u>S</u>ā<u>h</u>ib! What are you doing?" I replied: "<u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat, I am teaching there [in India]." <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat said: "Listen to one piece of advice." <u>H</u>a<u>d</u>rat Maulānā *ra<u>h</u>imahullāh* made me sit in front of him and said: "Just as you read the Qur'ān on a daily basis, make it incumbent on yourself to read the <u>H</u>adīth daily."

Our students return the Hadīth books to the *madrasah* library, and then never touch them again. Our students never pick up any book on the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Whereas Allāh *taʿālā* made his life a perfect example for our lives.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

"There is for you a perfect example in the Messenger of Allāh."

If Allāh *taʿālā* is giving us this guidance with regard to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, we will have to look at every aspect of his life. There are important lessons for us from incidents of his life.

Doctor Mustafā as-Sibāʿī was an illustrious research scholar of Syria. He wrote a book for university students. The book is titled, *as-Sīrah an-Nabawīyyah: Durūs wa ʿIbar* (lessons and admonitions from the life of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*). He drew a lesson from each incident of Rasūlullāh's *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* life. He shows us what lessons are learnt from an incident. For example, what happened in Badr, and what lessons we learn from it. What happened in Uhud and what lessons we learn from it.

Our students do not study the *Sīrah* (biography of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*), and their *mutālaʿah* of *Sīrah* is not deep.

H͟ad͟rat Maulānā Badr ʿĀlam *rah͟imahullāh* then said to me: "Now that you have come here [to Madīnah Munawwarah], you must go to one of the bookshops and purchase *Tajrīd Bukhārī*. When you return to India, you must read from it daily just as you read the Qur'ān. By doing this, you will not have all the narrations of *Bukhārī* in your mind, but one benefit you will certainly experience is that if any matter comes up, you will be able to say that this narration is in *Bukhārī Sharīf* and you read it there. You can then open it, and you will find the H͟adīth immediately. If you leave your books aside totally, and do not even refer to them, you will not remember even this much."

The purpose of acquiring knowledge

I was sitting with H͟ad͟rat just now and thinking to myself: Why is the temperament of *daʿwat* not developing in our students? We came to this *madrasah* to study Allāh's *Dīn* thoroughly, practise on it, and then convey it to Allāh's servants. This is our sole responsibility. Allāh *taʿālā* says:

لِيَتَفَقَّهُوْا فِي الدِّيْنِ وَلِيُنْذِرُوْا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوْا

"So that they may gain understanding of religion and warn their people when they return."

The Qur'ān says that the benefit of understanding of *Dīn* is to warn people. We do not seek knowledge to become a lecturer in a musjid, to become a teacher in some place, to deliver talks and people may praise us as excellent orators. This should not be our

purpose. Our purpose is to learn the beauties of this *Dīn*, practise on it, and then convey it to Allāh's servants. We must spend our lives in this *madrasah* while fully understanding and realizing that we are not studying for the sake of earning money. It is definitely not to lead a life of comfort, to buy houses, and to buy cars.

An insightful address of Hadrat Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib

Maulānā 'Alī Miyā Sāhib Nadwī *rahimahullāh* used to say to the students: If anyone has created this misunderstanding in you, then for Allāh's sake, remove it from your minds and change your course from now. There are many other paths which are open to you for earning of this world. You rather leave now, do not stay here. This path is a path of difficulties. Look at history and you will see that all the *dā'ī ilallāh* (inviters and callers towards Allāh *ta'ālā*) for the past 1 400 years lived a life of simplicity. They lived in this world while having just sufficient wealth to make ends meet. But they continued serving *Dīn*. Our elders did work in so small rooms which you and I cannot sit in. They made such great contributions which could only be undertaken by huge academies. Go to Thānabhawan and look at the small room in which Hadrat Thānwī *rahimahullāh* used to write and compile his books. You will be astonished, and think to yourself: Nine hundred and fifty books were written from this room!?

Go to Sahāranpūr and look at the room of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. You will be

amazed at how so many books were produced from a small room like this!? Look at his commentary of *Bukhārī Sharīf, Aujaz*, and so many other books which have spread throughout the world. When Arab *ʿulamā'* look at his books, they say: "This man has put in a lot of work – works which several of our lecturers and teachers will have to get together to do." Such huge books in 8-9 volumes where written by him in such a small room where there was no fan, no air conditioner. And that too, in the blazing heat of Sahāranpūr! This is what you call a life of abstinence and hard work.

The striving of the pious elders

I do not have the time or else I would have related to you some of the stories of our past *ʿulamā'* and under what conditions they acquired knowledge. So much so, even when a person got the desire to seek knowledge after getting married and having children, he went out on foot. He continued studying for twelve years, and after completing, he returned to Hyderabad, compiled a poem, and said to the *Nawāb Sāhib*: "It is my desire to visit the Haram Sharīf. And Allāh *taʿālā* has blessed you with a lot of wealth." So he made arrangements to send him to the Haram Sharīf. He proceeded there and studied Hadīth under the *ʿulamā'* of the Haram Sharīf. It is stated [in Persian]: "He remained in Raudah al-Jannah and studied *Bukhārī Sharīf* for so many nights." Then when he returned to India after twelve years, he began spreading the knowledge of Hadīth there.

Hadrat Maulānā Yūnus Sāhib *dāmat barakātuhum* is presently the Shaykh al-Hadīth in Mazāhir al-

ʽUlūm (Sahāranpūr). He did not go to Jaunpūr (his hometown) for about 7-8 years. He remained in Sahāranpūr throughout this period. But now, not even one week will pass, and our cars are waiting [to take us home]. I was in South Africa recently. I happened to go to one *madrasah*. There were about 15-20 minutes before the *madrasah* closes, but the students were already walking about. So one Maulānā said to me: "Maulānā! It has become very difficult for us to teach them." I asked: "Why?" He replied: "They all come with cell-phones [to class]. While the lessons are carrying on, they are busy with their cell-phones."

Allāhu akbar! How will these students study!? I studied *Hidāyah Akhīrayn* under H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Fad̲l ar-Rah̲mān S̲āh̲ib Peshāwarī. He had two periods for this subject. His temperament was of such a nature that if any student merely looked at his watch in his period, he would be finished. Maulānā would close the book immediately and say: "I see. You are worried about going home!? While we were looking at this commentary and that commentary until one o' clock in the morning. My eyes were closing, but I continued because I have to make you understand. But you cannot value all this!? Go! There will be no lessons." This was his response for just looking at a watch. How would he have tolerated a cell-phone? May Allāh *taʽālā* give *taufīq* (inspiration) to our students.

How to develop capability and rectitude

My dear brothers! Place yourselves in the service of your teachers and bequeath your lives to these

books. When a person bequeaths his life to books, and studies the books of our pious elders for years and years, and then establishes a bond with the *Ahlullāh*, he develops both capability and rectitude.

Look! One is to illuminate the mind. This is done be reading books. The more you read, the more illuminated your mind will become, and the more your treasure of facts will increase. The other is to illuminate the heart. This you will get from the *Ahlullāh*. The S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* used to get both these things by remaining in the company and service of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. The knowledge which they received from his blessed tongue would illuminate their minds, while their hearts would be illuminated by his blessed company.

Those who are studying *Daurah H̲adīth* (final year of the *ʿālim* course) must have read about H̲ad̲rat H̲anz̲alah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu*. He became worried and came outside looking quite stressed. He said:

نافق حنظلة، نافق حنظلة

"H̲anz̲alah has become a hypocrite. H̲anz̲alah has become a hypocrite."

H̲ad̲rat Abū Bakr *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu* asked him: "What has happened that is causing you to say you have become a hypocrite?" He replied: "When we are seated in the company of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, the condition of our hearts is

something else. When we return to our families, that condition does not remain.”

Anyway, when they used to sit in the company of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, it used to have an effect on their hearts. In like manner, sitting before one’s teachers and the *Ahlullāh* has an effect on the heart. Even shaking hands with the *Ahlullāh* has an effect.

What intention should one have when meeting the *Ahlullāh*?

My dear brothers! I had the opportunity of performing *ʿīd salāh* at the place of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hadīth Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He used to have the *ʿīd salāh* early. After performing the *ʿīd salāh*, we boarded a bus immediately and proceeded to Jalālābād. Hadrat Maulānā Masīhullāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had not returned from the *ʿīd gāh* as yet. So we remained waiting for him outside. Hadrat arrived after about 5-7 minutes. As you people may know, Hadrat was extremely affectionate. He saw us from a distance and said: “Aha, aha. Today we are having two *ʿīds*: one is the day of *ʿīd* itself, and then, the arrival of our beloved friends is also an *ʿīd*.”

These were very senior people. They used to express their joy even at seeing junior people like us. Hadrat then sat down on the terrace. He was not in the habit of conducting a *majlis* (assembly) on the day of *ʿīd*, but because we were there, he conducted a *majlis*. He then said: “Bhāi! Bring something sweet. Give these guests some sweet milk.” Bhāi Jān’s people went and brought some things.

H̲ad̲rat then asked us: "Have you come from Sahāranpūr?" We replied: "Yes." He said: "*Al-h̲amdu lillāh, māshā Allāh!* You spent your time very well. Okay, I have one question to ask you. When you shake hands with any *Allāh wālā* (pious servant of Allāh), what intention should you make?" We all remained silent. I too did not know what intention should be made. H̲ad̲rat paused for two minutes, and said: "Bhāiyo! When you go to meet any *Allāh wālā*, you must make this intention: 'O Allāh! Give me a share of the *maʿrifat* (true recognition of Allāh *taʿālā*) and *nisbat* (affinity, bond) which You have given him.' You will experience many blessings from this." I heard this personally from H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Masīh̲ullāh S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh* on the day of *ʿīd*.

Do not consider yourself to be perfect

The gist of what I said:

Study your books with a lot of effort. When you qualify from here, do not consider yourself to be perfect. Never think that you are now perfect, you have become an *ʿālim*, you have received your certificate, so there is no need for you to meet anyone.

Be constant and regular in studying H̲adīth and the *Sīrat*.

Establish a bond with the *Ahlullāh*, and consult them in every matter. H̲ad̲rat Thānwī *rah̲imahullāh* was such a powerful *ʿālim* that he was listed among the most distinguished *ʿulamāʾ* of his time. But I read with regard to him that as long as H̲ad̲rat

Gangohī *rahimahullāh* was alive, he would not post a reply to any *fatwā* without first showing it to Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh*. People used to ask him: "What is the matter that you do not issue a *fatwā* in the presence of Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh*?" This was essentially the respect which he accorded to Hadrat Gangohī *rahimahullāh*, and he used to regard him as one of his *asātidha* (teachers).

Qārī Muhammad Ramadān Sāhib teaches the higher books of *qirā'ah* in Dhābel. Qārī Hifz ar-Rahmān Sāhib used to come from Deoband and stay over at the place of Maulānā 'Abd al-Haq Miyā. So Qārī Muhammad Ramadān used to go to visit him there. At times, Qārī Sāhib would ask him to read the Qur'ān. Qārī Muhammad Ramadān would sit upright [as in salāh] and read the Qur'ān before him. Sometimes he would say: "Muhammad Ramadān, this is not how I taught you."

Qārī Ramadān Sāhib would need clarification of certain points in *Shātibīyyah* (a text book of *qirā'ah*), so he used to note them down. Whenever Qārī Hifz ar-Rahmān Sāhib would come from Deoband, he would go to him and ask him: "Hadrat, I do not understand this." There were times when Qārī Ramadān Sāhib would go to Deoband in the holidays and seek clarification to whatever he did not understand.

Maulānā 'Abd al-Ghafūr Sāhib Peshāwarī used to teach *Muslim Sharīf* in Dhābel. Maulānā Manzūr Sāhib was a senior *ustādh* in Mazāhir al-'Ulūm. He used to come from Sahāranpūr to Dhābel. I saw the

following incident one day: Maulānā Manẕūr S̲āh̲ib went to the house of Maulānā ʿAbd al-H̲aq S̲āh̲ib, so Maulānā ʿAbd al-Ghafūr S̲āh̲ib laid out his scarf on the floor, took Maulānā Manẕūr S̲āh̲ib's shoes, wrapped them in the scarf, and placed the bundle on his head. So I said: "H̲ad̲rat, what are you doing?" He replied: "These are the shoes of my *ustādh*. If I place them on my head, I will be able to understand my books a little." This is something which I witnessed with my own eyes.

My dear friends! These things are disappearing from our *madāris*, and students are adopting an attitude of independence. This is very harmful. I am therefore making a very humble appeal to you. This is an appeal from one brother to his brothers. Strive hard for the sake of knowledge, read books continually, and establish a bond with the *Ahlullāh*. *Inshā Allāh*, there will be light in your knowledge, and Allāh *taʿālā* will enable others to benefit tremendously from it. The more humility people adopted, the more Allāh *taʿālā* elevated them.

من تواضع لله رفعه الله

"Allāh elevates the person who humbles himself for Allāh's sake."

Greatness is for Allāh *taʿālā* alone. We say *Allāhu akbar* – Allāh is the greatest. There is no one great in this world. Greatness and superiority is for Allāh *taʿālā* alone. [A H̲adīth Qudsī states]:

الكبرياء ردائي والعظمة إزاري

"Majesty is My upper garment and greatness is My lower garment."

Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* explained all these things to us in the Ah̲ādīth.

You are fortunate

Allāh *taʿālā* gave us the inspiration to come to this *madrasah*. I am saying to you with full conviction. I am speaking to you as a student who has travelled to different parts of the world and seen the world. I am not one who did not leave his village. I have seen many things. *Al-h̲amdu lillāh*, I have been to America 3-4 times, and visited many cities there. After going there, my conviction has strengthened even more that the best way of life is the one given to us by Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. I am now saying this to you with absolute conviction. You can go yourself and have a look. Go to the big universities of America. Berkeley University is so large that you cannot move around on foot. You will need a conveyance. The libraries are so huge that if you were to stand on one end, and look at a person standing on the other end, he will appear very small to you. The library had three floors underground, and several floors above the ground. Computers were placed everywhere. I went to one of the assistants and said I need some Arabic and Persian books. The person immediately checked the computer and informed me that I will find them on such and such floor, on shelves 143 and 144. I

proceeded immediately to the lift, and went to that floor. And we really did find such books which – although they were printed in India – I did not see in India, but saw them in Berkeley University.

As for the male and female students who were moving about in the university corridors – their mannerisms and ways were no less than those of animals. They were behaving exactly as animals behave among their selves. The thought then came to my heart: the true direction of life is the one shown to us by Rasūlullāh s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam. We can say this with absolute conviction.

Allāh *taʿālā* has been very kind to you. You are very fortunate Allāh *taʿālā* gave you this place of study, and an excellent way to lead your life in which you yourself can live with comfort, and others can also live with comfort. You must be grateful to Allāh *taʿālā* for directing you towards this knowledge. But together with this, you must continue reading about the lives of our pious elders. You will benefit tremendously. *Inshā Allāh*, you will not experience any worry and hardship. *Inshā Allāh*, your hard work here will enable you to lead a good life in this world, and an excellent life in the Hereafter – *inshā Allāh*.

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم ولسائر المسلمين.

أللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد وبارك وسلم.

ربنا ظلمنا أنفسنا وإن لم تغفر لنا وترحمنا لنكونن من الخاسرين.

ربنا لا تزغ قلوبنا بعد إذ هديتنا وهب لنا من لدنك رحمة، إنك أنت الوهاب.

رب زدنا علما نافعا. رب زدنا علما نافعا. رب زدنا علما نافعا.

أللهم إنا نسئلك الهدى والتقى والعفاف والغنى.

أللهم اجعلنا من الصالحين. أللهم اجعلنا من الذاكرين. أللهم اجعلنا من القانتين.

أللهم ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار.

أللهم آت نفوسنا تقواها وزكها أنت خير من زكاها، أنت وليها ومولاها.

أللهم إن قلوبنا ونواصينا وجوارحنا بيدك، لم تملكنا منها شيئا، فإذا فعلت ذلك بنا فكن أنت ولينا واهدنا إلى سواء السبيل. واهدنا إلى سواء السبيل. وهدنا إلى سواء السبيل.

أللهم إنا نسئلك من خير ما سألك منه نبيك ورسولك محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم، ونعوذبك من شر ما استعاذ منه نبيك ورسولك محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم.

ربنا تقبل منا إنك أنت السميع العليم، وتب علينا إنك أنت التواب الرحيم.

وصلى الله على خير خلقه سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه أجمعين. برحمتك يا أرحم الراحمين.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AND NEED FOR ARABIC LITERATURE

Talk delivered in Dār al-ʿUlūm Chāphī, Pālanpūr, Gujarat on 20th March 2006

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين، سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين.

The need to strive on Arabic literature

We are not paying the needed attention to Arabic literature. H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Muh̲ammad Yūsūf S̲āh̲ib Kāndhlawī *rah̲imahullāh* went for the Bhopal *ijtimāʿ*. So we proceeded from Dhābel to go and meet H̲ad̲rat. We presented ourselves before him at the house where he was staying. H̲ad̲rat was very happy to see us, he got up from his place, embraced us, and said: "My heart is most delighted at meeting teachers of the *jāmiʿah*."

We then began conversing with him, and at one point he said: "Maulwī S̲āh̲ib! I studied *adab* (Arabic literature) very well. *Maqāmāt H̲arīrī, Mutanabbī, H̲amāsah* and so on are in the syllabus [so we obviously studied these books]. But in addition to

these, I also memorized *Qas̲īdah Burdah, Sabʿah Muʿallaqāt* and so on."

Consequently, H̲ad̲rat *rah̲imahullāh* had very good control over the Arabic language. If you were to read *Amānī al-Ah̲bār* (an Arabic commentary of *Sharh̲ Maʿānī al-Āthār*), you will notice his sentences flowing. Normally, our Indian *'ulamā'* cannot write in this manner. We are in the habit of writing in a rhyming style. Because we study *Maqāmāt*, we write in that style. I noticed that H̲ad̲rat Maulānā's speeches used to be very simple and flowing. This is because he undertook a deep study of literature, and memorized these books. This is how Allāh *taʿālā* gave him this ability.

H̲ad̲rat Shāh S̲āh̲ib [Maulānā Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī] *rah̲imahullāh* was an expert in Arabic literature. When Rashīd Rid̲ā, an Egyptian scholar, came to India and heard Shāh S̲āh̲ib's speeches on the topic of H̲adīth, he was most pleased, and said: "Had I not met these *'ulamā'* of Deoband, I would have went back [to Egypt] despondent about India."

From among H̲ad̲rat Shāh S̲āh̲ib's students, Maulānā Yūsuf S̲āh̲ib Binnaurī *rah̲imahullāh* was a powerful expert in the Arabic language. In like manner, Maulānā Idrīs S̲āh̲ib Kāndhlawī *rah̲imahullāh* was an expert in the Arabic language. Many of H̲ad̲rat Shāh S̲āh̲ib's students had an affinity with literature.

Hadrat Binnaurī's proficiency in Arabic literature

There was a farmer in Dhābel by the name of Sulaymān Bhāi Wājā. It was his habit to go to his farm in the *paunk*[1] season, and light a fire. He would then have a *paunk* party there. He would take all the teachers of the *jāmiʿah* to eat *paunk*. Hadrat Maulānā Yūsuf Sāhib Binnaurī *rahimahullāh*, Muftī Ismāʿīl Bismillāh, Maulānā Muhammad Kāndhlawī, Maulānā Anwār al-Haq Sāhib and others were teachers in Dhābel at the time. When we were in our early years of study, we used to accompany them to see to their needs – to bring water for them, run certain errands for them, and so on. All the *ʿulamā'* were seated there, and someone asked Maulānā Binnaurī *rahimahullāh*: "Hadrat, how many words of the Arabic vocabulary do you know from memory at the moment?"

Hadrat *rahimahullāh* replied: "*Al-hamdulillāh, al-hamdulillāh*, 90 000 words are presently in my mind." Since he knew 90 000 words, that is how he could write books like *Nafhatul ʿArab* and other books in the Arabic language.

Several years later, when I completed my *Daurah* (final year of *ʿālim* course), I took my maternal grandmother to the Hijāz in 1953. I had completed in that very year. Hadrat Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* was in Makkah Muʿazzamah at the time. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* had left Dhābel for Pakistan when I

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[1] A type of barley/wheat seed which is eaten as a snack.

was in my *Mishkāt* year. I saw Hadrat at the Musallā Hanafī with Shaykh Amīn al-Qutbī (a very senior Hanafī scholar). Shaykh Amīn was about to conduct his lessons there. Hadrat Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* was conversing with him on a particular issue. So I sat at a distance to listen to their conversation. I saw Hadrat talking to him in Arabic without any hesitation. I could not perceive in the slightest way that this was an Indian or Pakistani *ʿālim*. He sounded as if he was a scholar from Syria. Hadrat *rahimahullāh* was conversing with him in very eloquent Arabic. I was astounded at the capability which Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed to him despite the fact that he studied the same books which are taught in one of our Dār al-ʿUlūms. However, he did not restrict himself to a few *maqāmāt* of *Maqāmāt Harīrī*. In those days, about 20-25 *maqāmāt* used to be taught in Dār al-ʿUlūm. This was followed by *Mutanabbī* and then *Hamāsah*. All these books were studied by these personalities. Then when he travelled to Syria, he had opportunities to converse with the *ʿulamā'* there. Consequently, Hadrat Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* could converse with Arab *ʿulamā'* with full confidence.

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah *rahimahullāh* was so impressed by Hadrat Binnaurī *rahimahullāh* that whenever he made reference to him, he would refer to him as

أستاذنا الجليل المحدث الكبير الشيخ محمد يوسف البنوري

"Our grand teacher, the great Hadīth scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Yūsuf al-Binnaurī."

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah *rahimahullāh* referred to him in these glowing terms despite being a very erudite scholar himself. He was a Syrian scholar whose mother tongue was Arabic, and he used to speak very eloquent Arabic.

I heard Shaykh ʿAbd al-Fattāh Abū Ghuddah's speech at Dār al-ʿUlūm Zakarīyyā in Johannesburg. I was astounded at the words which flowed from his tongue. He sat down to deliver his speech, praised Allāh *taʿālā* and sent salutations to Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. Immediately thereafter, he said:

كنا نسمع أن هناك معادن الذهب، ولكن رأينا هنا معادن العلم والمعرفة

"We heard that you have gold mines here [in South Africa], but we see mines of knowledge and maʿrifat (congnition) here."

This is what he said about the *madrasah*. I was left astounded at hearing his expression. I thought to myself, these are Arab scholars, we must listen to their speeches.

There is a weakness in Arabic in our *madāris* because we gave up studying hard on Arabic as was done by our elders. Consequently, our best *ʿulamā'* who teach Hadīth cannot converse with an Arab *ʿālim* and express what is in their hearts.

My dear friends! There is a need to turn our attention towards this. We must work hard on the Arabic language. Correct understanding of the

Qur'ān and <u>H</u>adīth only comes after learning the Arabic language. We cannot know the eloquence of the Qur'ān without proficiency in Arabic. Writing articles is still something very far off. We should at least be able to understand the books of our elders.

THE STATUS OF THE QUR'ĀN AND THE PEOPLE OF THE QUR'ĀN

Talk delivered in Waltham Swede Musjid on 12 July 1998

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين، سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد! قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: من حسن إسلام المرء تركه ما لا يعنيه.

The Qur'ān's impact

Respected elders! The Qur'ān is a magnificent miracle which Allāh *taʿālā* revealed. When a person reads it correctly, the hairs on his body will stand on their ends.

There is a person in India by the name of Wahīduddīn Khān Sāhib. He goes to different countries of the world to attend conferences. He has been to many countries in Europe and America. He relates one incident in his travelogue. This incident came to my mind just now when the *qārī sāhib* was reading the Qur'ān. He writes that people from different religions were in attendance – Buddhists, Christians, Jews and Muslims. Each person was

expressing his view about his religion. At the end, they had a programme wherein a person from each religion had to read from his holy book. And so, the Jews read from their book, the Hindus who went from India read from the Veda, the priests read the Bible. Wahīduddīn Khān writes: I was looking at the crowd of 500 people and noticed that they were not affected by any of the books which were read to them. But when a *qārī sāhib* started reading the Qur'ān, a strange effect was seen on their faces.

A person is affected by just the recitation of the Qur'ān, even if he does not know its meaning. When the Qur'ān is read with full application of the rules of *tajwīd* – as read by the *qārī sāhib* just now – a person's heart will certainly give testimony to it being a book revealed by Allāh *taʿālā*. Tears flow from people's eyes. I saw people weeping bitterly although they did not even know the translation of the verses. This is the great impact which the Qur'ān has. It is the holy book of Allāh *taʿālā*, a great miracle of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, a book which is to remain until the day of Resurrection, and a miracle which will help you no matter in which part of the world you go to.

Acknowledgement of the Arabs

Anyway, we are not Arabs and do not speak this language. When the Qur'ān used to be recited before the Arabs, they would get up from the assembly and leave. They would say to the people, we know poetry, but this is not even poetry! We know what is fortunetelling, and this is certainly not the speech of a fortune teller. We know sorcery, and this is

definitely not sorcery. Allāh *taʿālā* conferred this Qur'ān with many unique excellent merits. If only we Muslims could appreciate this book of Allāh *taʿālā*.

My dear friends! This is a book which refreshes the soul. If a person reads beautifully, people are affected by it. When Hadrat Abū Bakr Siddīq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* used to read the Qur'ān, the women of the neighbourhood would get affected by his recitation. When Hadrat ʿUmar *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* heard the verses of the Qur'ān for the first time, they made a deep impact on him. Allāh forbid, he was actually going to kill Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He was walking with an unsheathed sword. He met someone along the way who asked him: "Where are you going? Your sister and brother-in-law have already embraced Islam."

He turned in anger and proceeded to his sister's house. On reaching there, he heard them reciting the Qur'ān. He began beating his sister until she began bleeding. She became angry at him and said: "O ʿUmar! You can do whatever you want, we have embraced this religion." He said: "Okay, what were you two reading? Show it to me." After all, she was his sister, the daughter of Khattāb. Moreover, she possessed the fervour of *īmān*. She said: "You cannot be given these verses of the Qur'ān. You are an idol worshipper, so you are impure. Go and take a bath first."

He went and took a bath, the pages were given to him. He read the following verses from there:

طه، مَآ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَى

"T̲ā hā. We did not send down to you the Qur'ān so that you may fall into distress." (Sūrah T̲ā Hā, 20: 1-2)

No sooner he read the initial verses of Sūrah T̲ā Hā, tears flowed from his eyes, and he no longer remained the person he was. The anger and rage with which he had come melted away. A few verses changed his heart completely. He lowered his head and proceeded straight to Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam.* The S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* were in Dār Arqam. When they saw 'Umar *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu* approaching, they said: "O Rasūlullāh! 'Umar is approaching with a sword in his hand."

H̲ad̲rat 'Umar *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu* was a feared person since *Jāhilī* (pre-Islamic) times. H̲ad̲rat H̲amzah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu* said: "There is nothing to worry about. If he came with a good intention, well and good. If not, we will see." When he entered, Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* struck his chest with his blessed hand and said: "O 'Umar! For how long [are you going to remain in unbelief]?" He replied: "I have come to embrace Islam."

H̲ad̲rat 'Alī's statement

Such is the blessing of the Qur'ān. Allāh *taʿālā* blessed us with such a great bounty - it is found in our homes, but we do not value it. How unfortunate! In the past, it was valued so much, that if a person

learnt just one verse from another, he would consider himself to be a slave of the one who taught him. There is a famous statement of H̲ad̲rat ʿAlī *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhu*:

من علمني حرفا فهو سيدي أبدا، إن شاء باعني وإن شاء اعتقني

"The person who teaches me a single letter is my master forever. He may sell me if he likes, or free me."

Respecting the teacher's child

Allāhu akbar! Look at how much those who taught the Qur'ān used to be valued. If the teacher's child had to pass by, the students would stand up out of respect. It is related that a pious personality was conducting a H̲adīth lesson, and was standing up repeatedly in the course of his lesson. The students did not know why the teacher was standing up in the course of the lesson, and then sitting down. And he did this several times. At the end of the lesson, they asked him: "H̲ad̲rat! What happened? Why were you standing up repeatedly in the course of the lesson, and then sitting down?" He replied: "Bhāi! While I was teaching, my teacher's son was playing about in the area. Whenever he passed in front of me in the course of his playing, I stood up." Respect for one's teacher is an exceptional thing. A small child of the teacher passes by while playing around, and he stands up out of respect for him.

Imām Aʿz̲am's respect

It is well known with regard to Imām Abū H̲anīfah *rah̲imahullāh* and mentioned in most of the books

that he never stretched out his legs towards his teacher's house. Nevertheless, respect for one's teacher is most essential. This is why our elders laid a lot of stress on it in their books, and explained it in their assemblies. They said: "Respect the one who teaches you, do not commit any act of disrespect."

The consequence of having ill-feeling towards the *'ulamā'*

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā Rashīd Ah̲mad Gangohī *rah̲imahullāh* was the *qut̲b* of his time, and the Abū H̲anīfah of the era. He says in his *Malfūz̲āt*. I have personally read this sentence there. The book, *Malfūz̲āt-e-Maulānā Gangohī*, is in print. He said in one of his assemblies: "Bhāi! The face of the person who speaks evil of the *'ulamā'* and of those who teach the Qur'ān is turned away from the *qiblah* when he goes into his grave." It is stated in the *Malfūz̲āt* that H̲ad̲rat *rah̲imahullāh* was leaning against something when he said this. He got up, sat upright, and said: "If anyone wishes, he may open a grave and take a look."

This is mentioned in his *Malfūz̲āt*, you can refer to it. These have been published. Look at the value and appreciation these pious personalities had for the *'ulamā'* and those teaching the Qur'ān. When we talk about these things, some people say: "Bhāi! Those were people of the past, they had such respect. Those times are no longer prevalent, where will anyone show respect to teachers?" This is not correct; you will still find people who show respect.

My Arshad is ill

I have personally witnessed incidents like these. Hadrat Madanī's *rahimahullāh* son, Maulānā Sayyid Arshad Sāhib, who visited here recently, fell ill when he was a little boy. Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh* was a student of Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* and also studied a bit under Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*. When the British imprisoned Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*, he said: "Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib will take my place to teach *Bukhārī Sharīf* [in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband]. He was an illustrious *ʿālim*, a distinguished scholar of Hadīth of India and Pakistan, and the Shaykh al-Hadīth of Dār al-ʿUlūm. Five hundred students at a time used to study *Bukhārī Sharīf* under him. I witnessed this scene myself. Hadrat was walking with some fruit in his hand. Someone asked him: "Hadrat, where are you going?" He replied: "Bhāi! My Arshad is ill, I am going to visit him." He did this solely because of his connection with Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*. This incident took place right before my eyes. There are thousands of stories like this. The knowledge and light of prophet-hood will enter our hearts when we value this knowledge and those who bear it.

Be particular about remembering the teachings of the pious elders

My dear brothers! It is something to fear a lot. Conditions are changing at a very swift rate. May Allāh *taʿālā* give us the *taufīq* (inspiration) to value and appreciate these elders, *auliyā'* and *ʿulamā'* of the *ummah*.

Allāh! Allāh! My dear brothers! I am feeling some fear speaking before you. I was quite affected by the recitation of the Qur'ān, that is why I said these few words to you. Shafīq al-Ummat Hadrat Hājī Fārūq Sāhib Sukkurwī is presently before you. Allāh *taʿālā* has really showered His favours on him. Allāh *taʿālā* bestowed him with such strength of heart, that I am left astounded. We also heard many things, we also spent time with the pious elders, we also travelled here and there. But we forget the teachings and statements of our pious elders. This is probably a result of our unconcern. When a person has an attachment and a concern, he will never forget. We people are heedless. Concerns about the world override our minds. This is why we forget many of the things which we hear. Allāh *taʿālā* has blessed him [Shafīq al-Ummat Hadrat Hājī Fārūq Sāhib Sukkurwī] with the *taufīq* to remember every single thing about our elders. He travelled all the way from Pakistan solely so that the teachings of our pious elders may be conveyed here, to apprise the *ummah* of the correct conditions, to show them the correct direction of life, and how to have concern for the Hereafter. This is the message with which Hadrat has come here. I will not be a barrier between you and Hadrat. I will make just this *duʿā* that Allāh *taʿālā* first of all gives me the *taufīq* and all of you as well to listen attentively to what Hadrat says, and make intention of practising. My dear brothers! It is only through actions that our life is successful.

A poet says: "It is through actions that one would either go to Paradise or the Hell-fire. Man by nature has been created from soil. His natural make up is

neither of light [whereby he could certainly have went to Paradise] nor of fire [whereby he could certainly have gone to the Hell-fire].”

May Allāh *taʿālā* inspire us to practise. Āmīn.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

THE NEED TO STRIVE FOR ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE

Talk delivered in Jāmiʿah Riyād al-ʿUlūm, Leicester, on 5th April 2005

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلوة والسلام على سيد المرسلين، سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه وأتباعه إلى يوم الدين

How should one's *mutālaʿah* be?

My dear friends! One of the biggest challenges facing our *madāris* at the moment is that knowledge has become too superficial. We are perceiving a deficiency in the depth of knowledge. The reason for this is that our *mutālaʿah* (studying and reading) is just on the surface, and too fast. No matter what book it is, we read it quickly, and once we complete reading it, we keep it away. This is not how it should be. Our *mutālaʿah* has to be investigative and deep. We must not read speedily to merely finish the book. Instead, we must reflect when we are reading, and we must read again and again.

Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā's instruction

Hadrat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā [Abul Hasan ʿAlī Nadwī] Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to say: Whenever you read

any book, and you come across good subject matter, you must read it several times until paragraphs after paragraphs are imprinted in your heart. If a particular subject matter is good, read it once, read it a second time, read it a third time so that it settles in your brain. This is necessary.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā S̲āh̲ib *rah̲imahullāh* adds: I read the books *Fajr al-Islam, D̲uh̲a al-Islam* and *Z̲uhr al-Islam* of Ah̲mad Amīn so many times that pages upon pages settled in my mind. H̲ad̲rat Maulānā *rah̲imahullāh* said this in *Nadwah* in an assembly after *ʿishā*. I was present there at the time. H̲ad̲rat said: Not only did I read the famous books of Doctor Ah̲mad Amīn, *Fajr al-Islam, D̲uh̲a al-Islam* and *Z̲uhr al-Islam*, but I licked them.

H̲ad̲rat Maulānā jokingly added: "It is good that Allāh *taʿālā* took him away, or else he may have written *Masā' al-Islam*[1] as well." H̲ad̲rat said this because Ah̲mad Amīn had very liberal ideas although people liked him and his style of Arabic was free flowing. Moreover, he wrote history in a unique way, and his style is exceptional. Nevertheless, I was saying that we need to get into the habit of *mut̲ālaʿah* which must be carried out

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[1] The titles *Fajr al-Islam, D̲uh̲a al-Islam* and *Z̲uhr al-Islam* translate as: the dawn of Islam, the mid-morning of Islam, the afternoon of Islam. H̲ad̲rat Maulānā ʿAlī Miyā *rah̲imahullāh* jokingly added *Masā' al-Islam* which translates as, the evening of Islam.

with full engrossment and attachment. Students of today have no interest whatsoever in *muṯālaʿah*.

The Englishmen's desire for *muṯālaʿah*

You ought to know how much desire the Englishmen have for *muṯālaʿah*. You board a train, and you will see everyone busy reading. Much attention is paid to this in Toronto as well. Every area has a public library. Before building a library, they take a survey of the area to see which nationalities live there, what languages they speak, and so on. And the libraries are then stocked accordingly. The area where I live has a library. When I went there the first time, they gave me a membership card. When I walked through the library I was astonished to find a section containing Urdu books. I was overjoyed when I saw this. I went through the books and my eyes fell on a book titled *Āb H̲ayāt* written by Maulānā Muh̲ammad H̲usayn Āzād S̲āh̲ib. I had searched high and low for this book when I was in India, and here I found it in Canada. I was immensely overjoyed. The book contains biographies of past poets, and the author is a very famous writer himself.

A unique example of academic engrossment

Anyway, I took the book immediately, recorded it in the register, took it home, and began reading it. The book relates the story of a famous poet of Delhi who, because of some problems, had to leave Delhi. He went to Rāmpūr. The *nawāb* of Rāmpūr was a major patron of *ʿulamā'*, poets and men of letters. This is

why many scholars assembled in this city. There were many philosophers and logicians there as well.

When the *nawāb s̱āẖib* heard that this person is a famous poet of Delhi, he apportioned a house for him and assigned a good wage for him. The rooms in his house opened to a beautiful orchard which was filled with fragrant flowers. The poet had carried his old manuscripts with him, and when he went to this house, he became occupied with them by day and night. A friend of his came to visit him after five to six months. In the course of the conversation, his friend said to him: "Why do you not open the windows? You have such a beautiful garden right outside your house. If you merely open the windows, the room will be filled with the fragrances of this garden."

The flowers in India are very fragrant. The flowers here in Europe have no fragrance whatsoever. In India, I noticed flowers like roses, *champā* (a shrub bearing fragrant yellow flowers), and *rāt rānī* (a shrub which lets off a powerful fragrance at night) perfuming the entire neighbourhood.

Anyway, the poet replied: "My garden is these manuscripts, and I did not even get an opportunity to open the windows."

Maulānā Āzād comments: This was the level of academic engrossment of these people. Six months passed without the poet opening a window in his house. He devoted all his attention to his manuscripts. Devoting one's mind to, and

concentrating on one particular thing creates firmness in one's knowledge.

One reason for a weakness in capability

There is no depth in our studies; we are merely reading things on the surface. A person starts reading a book, he leaves it aside before completing it, picks up another book, then picks up a story book, and so on. One cannot develop firmness in knowledge in this way. The different subject matters are not grasped completely by our brains. This is one reason for the weakness in our capability.

Sacrifices of past scholars for the sake of knowledge

Maulānā H̲usayn Āzād relates another incident in his book, *Āb H̲ayāt*. There was a scholar who came to know that a certain person in Lucknow has a manuscript of a valuable book. There were no printing presses in those days and people who wanted a book had to borrow it from someone, transcribe it and return it to the owner. They used to write the books by hand. This scholar was very enthusiastic and also a fast writer. Books used to get lost quite often, so people were hesitant in lending their books. Anyway, he went to the person who owned the book and said: "I have heard you have a manuscript of such and such book. I was very keen to read it from quite some time. I will really appreciate it if you could lend it to me."

He replied: "You have come from very far, you are a scholar, and I do not feel like refusing you. But at the same time, it is not my habit to lend my books."

He then thought of a middle way and said: “I cannot give you the entire book.” The books in those days were bound in separate parts. So he said: “I will give you one part at a time. When you have read one part, you must return it to me. I will then give you the next part.” Just imagine, the scholar was living in one end of the city and the book owner in the opposite end. In those days there were no vehicles like what we have. A person had to go on foot whether it was summer or winter. The person agreed to take one part at a time, and he would only take the next part when he completes and returns the previous part.

The Maulānā writes: Look at the sacrifices he made for knowledge. He used to take one part and read it while walking home. On reaching his house, he would copy it. He would then go back to return it, and repeat the whole process again. In this way, he copied the entire book, and read it three times in his up and down trips.

Maulānā Husayn Āzād complains about the people of his era (although quite some time has passed since he passed away). He writes: Unfortunately, books are now printed and available from bookshops. Our students do not have the enthusiasm to obtain books and read them. Whereas people of the past were so enthusiastic, that they would borrow one part at a time and read it. This resulted in firmness in their knowledge. As long as there is no firmness in knowledge, a person cannot make a meaningful contribution. It is essential to have firmness in knowledge.

How knowledge was acquired in the past

Previously, a person would devote himself to studying one subject at a time. For example, if people came to know that *ʿilm as-sarf* (etymology) was taught very well in Punjab, people would go there to study all the books on this subject over there. Then when they came to know of an expert in *nahw* (grammar) in a particular place, they would proceed there and study all the books on this subject from beginning to end. So they first learnt *sarf*, then *nahw*. They would now commence with literature (*adab*). This would be followed by *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *mantiq* (logic) and *falsafah* (philosophy). They would study all these sciences under the experts of these respective subjects, and several years would go in this. Once they developed mastery in these subjects, it would be the turn of Hadīth. Since they already studied all the difficult subjects, they did not experience any difficulty in solving the texts, and there was no problem in translating them. They would pay more attention to the meaning of the Hadīth and the proofs.

Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind's manner of teaching

Hadrat ʿAllāmah Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* said to me: "Maulwī Sāhib! Our Hadrat was not in the habit of lengthy explanations." He then asked me: "Do you know who I am referring to when I say 'Our Hadrat'?" I replied: "Hadrat, I do not know." He said: "When I say 'Our Hadrat', I am referring to Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*." Hadrat ʿAllāmah Ibrāhīm Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* studied under Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh*. He continues: "Our

Hadrat was not in the habit of lengthy explanations. He used to teach *Tirmidhī Sharīf, Abū Dā'ūd Sharīf* and *Bukhārī Sharīf*. He had very capable students, and they used to read the text (*'ibārat*). Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* will have the book in front of him and listen to the student reading. One two pages would be read. This is why it is called *daurah* – to turn, to repeat. At times, Hadrat would say: 'Bhāi! Hold on a bit. There can be an objection to this Hadīth because it is against the Hanafīs. But here is the reply to it. A conflicting Hadīth is found in such and such book. You must refer to that book, and whatever is written there is our proof. Okay, let us proceed.'"

If you were to look at the *taqrīr* of Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* which has been printed, you will find it to be very concise. When I first saw it, I could not understand why it was so concise. But when 'Allāmah Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* related this to me, I understood the reason.

Hadrat Shāh Sāhib's manner of teaching

When Hadrat Shāh Sāhib - 'Allāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī *rahimahullāh* – began teaching in Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, he made it a point to explain Ahādīth in detail in order to reconcile the *madhāhib* (plural of *madh-hab*), and to prove Hanafī *fīqh* through proofs. The main objection of the Ahl-e-Hadīth against the Hanafīs was that they do not have authentic Ahādīth, and the Hanafī *madh-hab* is weak. In order to repulse this accusation, Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* used to support the Hanafī *madh-hab* by quoting different Ahādīth, and saying:

“Look, this Hadīth supports our view.” As a result of this manner of teaching, his lessons used to be lengthy. This is how Hadrat ʿAllāmah Balyāwī *rahimahullāh* explains the change in the style of teaching which came into Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband.

Hadrat Shāh Sāhib’s sincerity

There came a time when Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* had some disputes with the authorities in Dār al-ʿUlūm. He became unhappy and left. Maulānā Ahmad Buzurg Sāhib *rahimahullāh* brought him to Dhābel. The question arose as to who would take Hadrat Shāh Sāhib’s place in Dār al-ʿUlūm. Look at his sincerity. People went to him and said: “All you have to do is start conducting your lessons in Jāmiʿ Musjid [Deoband], all these students will leave Dār al-ʿUlūm and come to you.”

They said this because there was no *Muhaddith* (Hadīth scholar) in the subcontinent who could compare with him in that era. He was a walking library. People used to refer to him as *khātam al-muhaddithīn* (the seal of Hadīth scholars). But Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* said: “It is not permissible for any *Muhaddith* to start an opposing class in a place where Hadīth is already being taught. I cannot do this. If I teach Hadīth, I will do somewhere far from here.”

This shows his sincerity. If it was any *ʿālim* from our times, he would have sat down in the musjid opposite the road and said: “Come! I am going to see who is going to teach Hadīth in opposition to me.” But these traits were not in the elders of the past.

Together with knowledge, their hearts were very pure, and they were on the highest levels of *taqwā*.

Hadrat Shāh Sāhib's striving in Dhābel

Anyway, Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* came to Dhābel, and in those days there were no comforts to be found. When Maulānā Buzurg Sāhib brought him, there was no solid building there. He housed in a house in Simlak. Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* would walk from Simlak to Dhābel to conduct his lessons. There were no solid roads. He used to walk in the mud, and there was an excess of mosquitoes. In short, it was a tough life, but Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh* still gave preference to remaining in Dhābel.

Hadrat Madanī's style of teaching

In the meantime, Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband started looking for a *Muhaddith* to take Hadrat Shāh Sāhib's place. Hadrat Shaykh al-Hind *rahimahullāh* had another student by the name of Hadrat Maulānā Husayn Ahmad Madanī *rahimahullāh* who was teaching in Calcutta at the time. So he was brought. He had taught *Bukhārī Sharīf* in Musjid-e-Nabawī for ten years. While conducting his lessons there, he used to point towards the blessed grave of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* and say:

قال صاحب هذا القبر هكذا...

"The inhabitant of this grave said…"

Many people from the Arab countries became students of Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*. Hadrat was very fluent in Arabic, and possessed excellent capabilities. When he came to Deoband and had to take the place of Hadrat Shāh Sāhib *rahimahullāh*, he had no alternative but to go into lengthy explanations as well. Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh* used to place all the *Sihāh Sittah* (the six most authentic collections of Hadīth) on the desk in front of him. I saw this with my own eyes. I was in the early years of my study at the time, but we would occasionally pass the Dār al-Hadīth, and we used to see an entire pile of books in front of Hadrat Madanī *rahimahullāh*. He used to conduct his lesson by constantly showing proofs from the different books. [For example, he would say] "Here is this narration. This is what Abū Dā'ūd has to say about it." In this way, the lessons used to be very lengthy.

Then came the era of Hadrat Maulānā Fakhr ad-Dīn Sāhib *rahimahullāh*. He used to speak in idiomatic language and had a very strong memory. He used to conduct a very powerful *Bukhārī* lesson. He used to teach *Bukhārī* daily for five hours at a time. Anyway, because of the differences in the capabilities of students, the *'ulamā'* began lengthening their explanations and lessons. Previously, students would come fully prepared to class. These days, they merely walk in without any preparation whatsoever.

Once I was sitting with Qādī Sajjād Husayn Sāhib in Fatahpūrī Musjid in Delhi. He was teaching *Bukhārī Sharīf*. I saw a few students of *Daurah Hadīth* sitting in front of him. He said to me: "Maulānā! Look at

how times have changed. You have to first teach these students to read the text correctly, then teach them to translate it, and then explain the meaning and sense to them. I have to do all this myself. And these are residents of Delhi – they merely eat and drink, and come and sit down here." He himself was from Delhi and so he spoke in that special way of those who live there. The same is happening today – students do not strive at all.

What must our students do?

If you spend the night going through your books, looking at the marginal notes and commentaries; then when you go to class the next morning, all you have to do is pay attention to solve whatever problems you encountered at night. If you then look at the book one more time, it will settle in your mind. If we want a solid foundation and capability, we will have to work very hard with absolute focus and concentration. Focus is essential for the acquisition of knowledge. This focus is no more found in us. We have started to read too many other side issues, and move around here and there in the holidays.

The fruit of hard work

Our elders of the past were not like this. They used to study in small rooms. Allāh *taʿālā* conferred a very high rank to Hadrat Maulānā Yūnus Sāhib Jaunpūrī *dāmat barakātuhum*. He did not receive this position just like that. Rather, what we see is the result of his hard work. During his student days, he never left Sahāranpūr to go home. He remained there in

Hadrat Shaykh's *rahimahullāh* service. Consequently, when he qualified, Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* said: "Give Yūnus to teach *Bukhārī*." He said this although many old and senior teachers of Mazāhir al-'Ulūm were available. But Hadrat Shaykh *rahimahullāh* said: "No. Yūnus will teach." This is because Hadrat saw how Maulānā Yūnus Sāhib made himself free [for knowledge]. And so, he deserved this honour.

Experience it for yourself

I want you to try this and see it for yourself. When you get holidays, do not go home. Remain in the *madrasah* and continue going through your books. Do this for a few years and see how your knowledge will progress from one level to the next. Any student can try this and see for himself. When a person remains focussed on one particular line of action, he acquires perfection in it.

Hadrat Maulānā 'Umar Sāhib *rahimahullāh* went to South Africa, so some people said to him: "Hadrat, the people here are very good cooks." He replied: "Very good, you are absolutely correct. In whatever field people put in more effort, they will certainly progress in it. The South Africans put in more effort in cooking, so they will certainly progress in this regard." So no matter in which line you strive hard, you will progress in it. This is an absolute fact. Those who play professional cricket and spend their days and night in it, they will make a name for themselves in this field. Our *mu'adh-dhin* in Baroda [a city in Gujarat] has a son who became attached to cricket. He progressed until he was selected for the

provincial team. This happened because he remained focussed in this field and strove hard in it. This is how he progressed.

The need to remain focussed

What I am trying to tell you is that if you want to acquire firmness in knowledge and to progress in it, you must remain focussed. This is essential. You must become so engrossed with your books that you have nothing to do with anything besides your books. Read a single book several times. When we were studying in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband, we had a Kashmiri student with us. He studied the books of each subject three times. The teachers used to ask him: “For how long are you going to remain in Dār al-ʿUlūm [if you are going to study each subject three times]?” He would reply: “Hadrat! I will not stop studying until I am fully satisfied. Consequently, when he completed studying all the subjects, the Majlis-e-Shūrā of Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband decided to appoint him as a teacher from the following Shawwāl. The members of the Shūrā felt they will not find a better teacher than him. Unfortunately, he was not destined for this because he passed away soon thereafter. He used to live in a musjid where he used to call out the *adhān*, and for which he used to receive his meals.

The striving of a Peshāwarī student

We saw a few students in Dār al-ʿUlūm Deoband having just one set of clothes. Every Friday we would see some students walking around with only a *lungī* (sarong type loin cloth which covers the lower half of

the body). I asked someone one day: "I see that one student from Peshawar like this every Friday. What is the reason for this?" The person said to me: "He has just one set of clothes which he washes on Fridays, dries them, and then wears them." You will not see him drinking tea. The moment the *fajr s̲alāh* is performed, he would carry his books and proceed directly to his classroom. He would then sit and study long before the arrival of the teacher. All the students were in the habit of going for tea after *fajr s̲alāh*, but these poor students would not have any tea. So we saw students of this nature as well. Their academic capabilities used to become solid because they directed their entire minds towards knowledge. They would neither go to Sahāranpūr nor to the shops. A person can only go to the shops if he has money. Because we have money in our pockets, we will go out of the *madrasah,* walk around in the bazaars and shopping places. Our students in India have become very desirous of moving about and walking around. This has destroyed knowledge. And no sooner they complete *Daurah H̲adīth* (the final year of the *ʿālim* course), they make demands on their parents to get them married. Once the wife comes, they go out shopping and visiting places together.

The extent of retrogression in our *madāris*

I happened to go to a *madrasah* in India about three weeks ago. A group of students were seated. I asked: "What year students are these." I was told they were studying *Sharh̲ al-Wiqāyah* (a book of jurisprudence normally taught in the 3rd or 4th year). I asked one of the students to read the text (*ʿibārat*) for me. They

were studying *Bāb an-Najāsah* (the chapter on impurity) at the time. He read the words:

وَبَالَ عَلَى حِنْطَةٍ

"He urinated on wheat."

After reading the full text, I asked him to translate it. He translated [the above words] as: "a spike of wheat appeared." I asked him: "Who allowed you to sit in the *Sharh al-Wiqāyah* class? How did you understand the word *bāla* as *bālī*?" He read the word *hintah* and thought the subject is about a spike of wheat. I was astonished to see a student in *Sharh al-Wiqāyah* translating in this way. The conjugation *bāla, yabūlu, baulan* (to urinate) is such a famous word, and yet he is referring to it as *bālī*!?

This is the level of retrogression in our *madāris*. We are answerable to Allāh *taʿālā* for this. My dear friends! Our people are donating thousands and millions to our *madāris*. They are spending their entire days in their businesses, and the money which they earn, they are giving it to us. If we use their money, we live in rooms which have been constructed with their monies, and use all these things, then we are most certainly accountable to Allāh *taʿālā*. We will have to answer to Him. This is not right. Our people spend so much of money on us and we study in such a manner that we do not even know what the text it, we do not understand the meaning of the Qur'ān, we do not know the explanation of the Hadīth, we are not able to write

just two lines of Arabic, we cannot speak two sentences of Arabic! This is a deplorable situation.

The importance of pronunciation in the Arabic language

The person studying Arabic must be able to pronounce correctly. Pronunciation causes many differences in meaning. If pronunciation is not correct, a completely opposite meaning could be taken. Every person studying Arabic must ensure he pronounces the letters correctly irrespective of whether he is reading the Qur'ān, H̲adīth or any other Arabic book.

I notice students considerate of the rules of *tajwīd* when reading the Qur'ān. But when they read *Hidāyah, Us̲ūl ash-Shāshī* and *Nūr al-Anwār* they do not consider the rules of *tajwīd*. The purpose of *tajwīd* is to habituate your tongue to pronounce correctly when you reading the Qur'ān and when reading any other Arabic book such as *Hidāyah*. After all, even the Ah̲ādīth are in Arabic. Why, then, do you read it without proper pronunciation? I notice the students also disregarding correct pronunciation when reading the prescribed *duʿās*. This is not right. The very word, *tajwīd*, means to utter a word in a beautiful way. The word *tajwīd* is derived from *jaudah*, and the opposite of *jaudah* is *radā'ah*, which means bad, and of a low quality. While *jaudah* means good, and of a high quality.

Nevertheless, *tajwīd* refers to pronouncing a word from its *makhraj* (point of origin) together with its qualities. If we have understood that *jīm* is

pronounced in a certain way, this is the *makhraj* of *shīn*, this is the *makhraj* of *qāf*, and this is the *makhraj* of *d̲āwd*; then we will have to take this into consideration everywhere.

When we were in Deoband, our Shaykh Mah̲mūd Mis̲rī was very particular about this. A student did not attend class one day. He asked:

أين غاب محمد؟

"Where has Muh̲ammad disappeared to?"

I was sitting close by, so I said:

يا شيخ، هو مريز

"O Shaykh, he is ill."

I did not pronounce the *d̲āwd* correctly, it sounded like a *zā*. The Shaykh got angry and said:

أنت تتكلم مريز مريز مريز؟

"You are saying marīz, marīz, marīz?"

لا تقل مريز، بل مريض

"Do not say marīz, say marīd̲."

The letter *d̲āwd* is a peculiarity of the Arabs. This is why entire booklets are devoted to its *makhraj*. They discuss the issue of whether

هل هو مشابه بالظاء أو بالدال؟ ولا الضالين ولا الظالين والدالين

"it is similar to z̲āw or dāl? Do you say: wa lad̲-d̲āwl līn, wa laz̲ z̲āwl līn and wad dāwlīn?"

This pronunciation is something we have to learn. Once you have learnt the correct pronunciation of *d̲āwd* [or any other letter], then no matter where you read it – whether in a book of *fiqh* or H̲adīth – you must pronounce it correctly.

The importance of *mah̲fūz̲āt*

I had mentioned this before to you. One of the weaknesses in our children is that they do not give attention to *mah̲fūz̲āt* (memorizing extracts). They have to memorize extracts of Arabic poetry and prose from the very first year of their studies. We have to memorize excellent extracts of poetry and prose. This practice is quite in vogue in the Arab countries, and many books on this subject have been printed. A book has been printed from Benares by the title, *Majmūʿah min an-naz̲m wa an-nathr* (an anthology of poetry and prose). It contains excellent examples of Arabic prose and poetry. It would be good to memorize the entire book. If you memorize it, you will have a good treasure of Arabic poems and extracts. If a student does not even have a treasure of vocabulary in his heart, how is he going to construct sentences? It is essential to have a vocabulary if you want to construct sentences. For example, a person says: I bought a hat from the market. You will first have to know the meanings of bought, hat and market. Only then will you be able

to construct this sentence. A hat in Arabic is *qalansuwah*, the market is translated as *sūq*, and buying is translated as *ishtirā'*. The past tense of this word is *ishtaraytu*. So the sentence will read as:

اشتريت القلنسوة من السوق

"I bought the hat from the market."

If you do not know these words, how will you construct the sentence? Just this morning I told you that half the book, *S̱afwatul Maṯādir*, contains *maṯādir* (verbal nouns) while the other half contains names of things. You have to learn these first so that you at least have a vocabulary of 100-200 words. For example, what are the words related to *madrasah*? What is a board? What is a pen? What is an exercise book? If these words are known, a student will be able to construct sentences. If he knows that the word *sabbūrah* refers to a black-board, *ṯabāshīr* refers to chalk, *kataba yaktubu* means to write; he will be able to construct a sentence as follows:

كتب الأستاذ على السبورة بالطباشير

"The teacher wrote on the board with chalk."

You will be able to construct fifty such sentences if you remember the vocabulary. If a student remembers all the words related to a subject, he will be able to join the words and construct sentences. For example, I travelled from London to Bombay by

plane. You may know the word for travelling, but if you do not know the word for aeroplane, how are you going to make this sentence?

سافرت من لندن إلى بومبائي بالطائرة

"I travelled from London to Mumbai by plane."

If you knew the word for plane, you could have constructed the above sentence.

The need to know the style of each language

We also have to understand the style of the Arabic language. The verb comes first, then subject, and then the predicate. For example, we say: Khālid went to the market. In Urdu [and in English as well], we mention the word Khālid first, followed by went [in English] and then market. In Arabic, it will be different. We will say:

ذهب خالد إلى السوق

[Literal translation]: "went Khālid to the market." Proper translation: *"Khālid went to the market."*

So we have to understand the Arabic style. We have to know the style of the English language, of French, etc. You are living here [in England], so you have to know English grammar. You have to know which words come at the beginning of a sentence. If a person understands these things, it becomes easy for him to translate. May Allāh *taʿālā* enable us to understand these things, leave aside all worldly

attachments, and devote ourselves totally to the acquisition of knowledge.

A few books which ought to be studied

Shaykh ʿAbdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah *rahimahullāh* has written a book titled *Safhāt min Sabr al-ʿUlamā'*. You must certainly read this book so that we learn what hardships our *ʿulamā'* of the past bore for the acquisition of knowledge, what conditions they experienced. Many stories of the pious elders are related in it, and the language too is very sweet. The Shaykh wrote another book titled *Qīmah az-Zaman ʿinda a-ʿUlamā'* (the value of time in the eyes of *ʿulamā'*). The Shaykh's language is very sweet and flowing. Both these books have to be read by every student. The third book is *ar-Rasūl al-Muʿallim* (Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* the teacher). When you qualify from here, you will be engaged in passing on *Dīnī* knowledge. You should most certainly read this book. By reading it, you will learn how much of patience and tolerance a teacher should have, how much of restraint he must have, etc. You have to understand these things. When you leave here and go out into the world, how are you going to converse with the *ummah*? If someone poses a question in an uncouth manner, how will you respond? You will learn these points from this book. It highlights Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* as a teacher and his teaching methodologies.

Rasūlullāh's *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* teaching methodologies

Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* used to teach through physical things so that even the most unlettered villager would understand what he was saying. He was walking with the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* on one occasion when he saw a dead kid (young goat) lying on the road. Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* stopped and asked: "Who from among you will buy this from me?" the S̲ah̲ābah *rad̲iyallāhu ʿanhum* asked in surprise: "O Rasūlullāh! This goat's ears are cut off. Even if it was alive, we would not have bought it. Where will we ever buy this dead goat?" Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* posed this question to turn their full attention towards himself. He then said: "This is such a worthless thing that even if it was alive, no one would have bought it. Listen! This world is even more worthless in Allāh's sight than this goat is to you." So Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* wanted to demonstrate to them the worthlessness and insignificance of the world in Allāh's sight. This is why he stood there, pointed to it [and asked them the above question]. This was his way of teaching them.

An acknowledgement from a professor

In Toronto we have an expert in the field of education. His name is Professor Sirāj ad-Dīn S̲āh̲ib, and he is an Egyptian. He delivers lectures twice a week, and I have the opportunity of sitting and talking with him quite frequently. I asked him one day: "What are the special traits and peculiarities of

the new ways of teaching and teaching methodologies which have been developed nowadays? Tell me because I am involved with *madāris*, and I would like to know."

He replied: "Maulānā! I have studied more than 150 British and American books on the subject of education, and this is my field. I am a lecturer in a university, but I can tell you with certainty that when I read the Qur'ān and H̲adīth, I conclude that all the expert educationists of today have not even reached the level on which Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* was."

This is what he said despite being an expert educationist himself, and delivering lectures at a university on this subject. He says that these educationists are still very slowly moving towards the manner in which Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* educated the *ummah* and the methodology adopted by him. But we feel they are teaching us new and modern ways of teaching. They are merely telling us what Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* already taught us. But because we do not ponder on the Ah̲ādīth from this angel [of education], we do not perceive these points.

A teacher has to be forbearing

D̲amām ibn Thaʿlabah, the chief of the Banū Saʿd, came to the assembly of Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*. He stood and asked: "Which of you is Muh̲ammad?" He had a sword in his hand when he asked this question. Rasūlullāh *s̲allallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* did not say: "Hey, what is this

uncivilized way of speaking? Why are you just standing there outside and asking: 'Which of you is Muhammad?' You should offer *salām* first, and sit down at least." Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* did not say any of these things. Instead, he remained silent.

Sayyidunā Abū Bakr Siddīq *radiyallāhu ʿanhu* replied, and what a beautiful reply he gave. He said:

هذا الرجل الأبيض المتكئ

"This fair person who is leaning here is Muhammad."

Damām said:

يا ابن عبد المطلب، إني سائلك فمشدد عليك

"O son of ʿAbd al-Muttalib! I am going to ask you some questions, and I am going to be quite harsh in this regard."

Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam* did not become angry in the least. He merely said:

سل ما بدا لك

"You may ask whatever you like."

When we read this reply of Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam*, we begin to understand how tolerant and forbearing a teacher has to be. Even if a person were to address him in such an uncivilized way, he must not become angry. Instead, he must

try to make him understand in a soft and lenient way.

A person was studying a lesson of *fiqh* under Imām Shāfiʽī *rahimahullāh*. He taught him the lesson seventy times but he still did not understand it. The man fell ashamed and left the room. Imām Shāfiʽī *rahimahullāh* went behind him, seated him in another room and asked: "Brother! Why did you leave?" He replied: "I am ashamed over the fact that you taught me so many times but I still do not understand it." Imām Shāfiʽī *rahimahullāh* began explaining it to him again until he understood it. When we read stories like this, our hairs stand on their ends. These were the true teachers who used to toil to the extreme end. This is the meaning of life – that a person must develop restlessness in his heart [for the well-being of his fellow humans].

Iqbāl says that if blood flows around in man's body, nothing is achieved. If a person does not have the pain of the liver, he has no life. The real life is of the one who has the pain for the *ummah* in his heart. A living person is the one who has a pain for his students, who has a pain for the youth of the *ummah*, who is worried about which direction the followers of our beloved Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʽalayhi wa sallam* are heading. His heart pains at all these things. He brings them close to himself, feeds them, and teaches them matters of *Dīn* with affection. He says to them: "Look here, brother. We have to follow the way shown to us by Allāh *taʽālā* and Rasūlullāh *sallallāhu ʽalayhi wa sallam*." If we develop this pain and restlessness in our lives, they will become

meaningful. If not, they will be worthless. May Allāh *taʿālā* confer this pain to us solely out of His grace. Āmīn.

ألللهم صل على سيدنا محمد وعلى آل سيدنا محمد وبارك وسلم.

ربنا ظلمنا أنفسنا وإن لم تغفر لنا وترحمنا لنكونن من الخاسرين.

أللهم إنا نسئلك علما نافعا، ورزقا واسعا، وشفاء من كل داء.

أللهم إن قلوبنا ونواصينا وجوارحنا بيدك، لم تملكنا منها شيئا فإذا فعلت ذلك بنا فكن أنت ولينا واهدنا إلى سواء السبيل.

أللهم اجعلنا هادين مهتدين، غير ضالين ولا مضلين، سلما لأوليائك، وحربا لأعدائك.

أللهم آت نفوسنا تقواها وزكها أنت خير من زكاها، أنت وليها ومولاها.

أللهم وفقنا لما تحب وترضى، واجعل آخرتنا خيرا من الأولى.

أللهم إنا نسئلك الهدى والتقى والعفاف والغنى.

أللهم ربنا آتنا في الدنيا حسنة وفي الآخرة حسنة وقنا عذاب النار.

وصلى الله تعالى على خير خلقه سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين، برحمتك يا أرحم الراحمين.

❁❁❁

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I request the reader to inform me of any errors, mistakes, and slip-ups in this translation. Constructive criticism and suggestions are most welcome. I can be contacted via e-mail: maulanamahomedy@gmail.com

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